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THE QUEEN OF NAPLES AND LORD NELSON

AN HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHY BASED ON MSS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM AND ON LETTERS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS PRESERVED AMONGST THE MORRISON MSS.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

'THE REAL LORD BYRON,' 'LADY HAMILTON AND LORD NELSON,' ETC., ETC.

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(CONTINUED.)

THE QUEEN OF NAPLES

AND

LORD NELSON.

CHAPTER XVII.

NELSON'S VICTORY AND MACK'S FIASCO.

Acquittal of Luigi de Medici—Duchess of Cassano and Princess of Colonna—Colletta's Testimony to Maria Caroline's Sense of Justice—Intelligence from the Queen to the British Embassy—Minor 'Heroes' at Naples—Battle of the Nile—Maria Caroline's Delight at the Victory—Emma Hamilton's Note touching 'the infernal French'—Monsieur Gagnière at Fault—Maria Caroline's Benignity to Captain Hoste—Nelson's triumphal Re-appearance at Naples—Garat's Indignation—Maria Caroline's 'Opportunity'—She resolves to seize it—Apology for her Policy—Her Visits to San Germano—Her martial Ardour—Nelson's Distrust of Mack—Buonaparte's Despatches from Egypt—More secret Intelligence for Sir William Hamilton—The Queen plays for high Prizes—General Mack's Incompetence—'The Campaign of Seventeen Days'—Ferdinand at Rome—His Letter to the Pope—Rejoicings at Naples—Fortune Frowns on the Queen—Her Dismay and Misery—Joy of the Neapolitan Jacobins—Maria Caroline's Grief for her Husband—Her Design for the Safety of her Children—The monstrous Story.

1798 A.D.

In this review of the events of Maria Caroline's actions in 1798, notice should be taken again of the trial

and acquittal of the Chevalier Luigi de Medici of the grave charges that had already resulted in his imprisonment for four years.

Those who have studied Colletta's 'Story of Naples' are not likely to have forgotten the historian's equally pathetic and dramatic account of the terms in which the Duchess of Cassano, a woman of venerable age, and the Princess of Colonna, a lovely creature still possessing the charms of youth, implored Maria Caroline to restore to them their sons, who had now for four years been awaiting in prison their trial on charges of which the petitioners declared them innocent. Touched by the looks and words of these noble ladies, Maria Caroline was shaken in her belief of the guilt of the prisoners, and gave orders that they should be brought to fair trial without further delay. The result was that twenty-eight culprits,—including such men of high birth as Medici, Canzano, Colonna, and Cassano, and such men of learning as Mario Pagano, Ignazio Ciaja, Domenico Bisceglia, and Teodoro Monticelli,—were brought to trial, found guiltless, and set at liberty, to the general delight of the Neapolitans. Speaking of the spirit which had animated the Queen throughout the tedious proceedings against these victims of suspicion, Colletta says, 'Inflexible towards crime, she had no desire to persecute the innocent, differing in this respect from her agents, who derived their power and influence from the general misery. Ferdinand and Caroline sincerely believed those who had been arrested were traitors, and could not at this period be charged with injustice . . . .' Coming from the

historian, who is the most severe and authoritative, because the most moderate and conscientious, of the Queen's literary assailants, these words are noteworthy and impressive testimony that, till she was confronted by triumphant revolution amongst her own people, Maria Caroline was wholly innocent of the charges, that are chiefly accountable for the opprobrium that has been poured upon her.

Nelson was within five days of achieving greatness at the Nile, when Lady Hamilton received the following note from Her Majesty:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[27th July, 1798.]

'My very dear Friend,

'Faithful to my promise, I have had the cypher copied quickly, and send it to you. You will return it at your convenience. One sees how sincere and right-thinking with their allies these gentlemen are. To conclude, I enjoin secrecy in respect to myself, so that I may not be compromised. Acknowledge nothing but my sincere and loyal friendship. Good night. A thousand compliments to the Chevalier.'

Marked on the envelope by Lady Hamilton, 'July 27th, 1798,' this note is chiefly valuable at the present time for affording another example of the way in which Maria Caroline continued to feed the British ambassador with secret intelligence, which he was enjoined to use cautiously, so that she should not be compromised. Instead of being extorted from the Queen by Emma the Irresistible praying at the royal feet, the copy of the epistle was *sent* by Maria Caroline to Sir William Hamilton through their ordinary channel of communication.

Towards the close of August, 1798, Emma Hamilton received another confidential letter from the Queen,—a letter the adventuress was instructed to burn, but of course preserved,—

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[ ]

'My dear Milady,

'Faithful to my promises I write you word, for yourself and the Chevalier alone, that we received yesterevening a courier of the 15th August from the modern Sodom. Nothing is yet definitively settled. It even seemed that they wished to make us languish, to hold us paralysed all the time of the great heats, "pour ensuite renfort recue nous dicter leur loix" (*sic*). But so far as our young negotiator has been able to learn and apprehend, the demands will be inadmissible, and it will be necessary to prepare for every contingency. May God help us and animate our people with courage or at least with obedience, "car il faudra forcer tous les moyens!" Adieu! All this for you two alone. Burn, I pray you, my letter. To-morrow a courier departs for Vienna and Eden, so that he may send to England, in order to be always exact with our true allies. Pity your attached friend—Charlotte.'

Brought to Naples on the 3rd (*not* 1st) of September, 1798, by Captain Capel in the brig *Mutine* (Captain Hoste), the intelligence of Nelson's glorious victory in Aboukir Bay threw Maria Caroline into ecstasies of passionate delight. Seizing her pen, the happy woman threw off this letter (first published in Pettigrew's 'Nelson') of exultation, sympathy, and gratitude to her faithful instrument:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[3rd September, 1798.]

'My dear Milady,

'What happiness, what glory, what consola-

tion for this unique, great and illustrious nation! How obliged and grateful I am to you! I am all alive (j'ai pleine vie). I embrace my children, my husband. This news has given me life. I was inexpressibly overwhelmed (infiniment accable). What bravery! what courage! For my solace, I would embrace you. This evening, to-morrow I would see with the greatest joy your heroes, the defenders of Italy. Ah! if they take a portrait of the great Nelson, I will have it in my chamber. My gratitude is engraven on my heart. Live! long live this brave nation and her honoured navy! It is a glory in which I participate, as much for our gain which is very great, as for the glory of the first flag in the whole world. Hip! hip! my dear Miledy (Hope! hope! ma chere Miledy), I am wild with joy. With what pleasure shall we see our heroes this evening! I cannot say this binds me to your great nation, for I have ever been, am and shall be devoted to her; but it enlarges my gratitude, which it is so sweet to feel for those whom one honours and cherishes so completely. My tender compliments to the Chevalier! I embrace you! My children, all who belong to me feel all that they owe you, and are wild with joy. May Heaven make a nation, so great, magnanimous and brave, greatly prosperous! May I be able to see the brave Nelson and the victorious squadron, and, with all my dearly beloved family about me, thank them for their achievements. Adieu till we meet again this evening. Let me see our hero [? heroes] this evening! Adieu.—CHARLOTTE.'

On the envelope of this letter, Lady Hamilton wrote, 'Receved Monday evening Sep^{br} 3 1798 the happy day we receved the joyful news of the gret Victory over the infernal french by the brave gallant Nelson.'

Had the intimacy of Maria Caroline and Emma Hamilton been the league of wickedness which their defamers wish us to think it, is it conceivable that the former would have written as she does in this letter to her alleged companion in immorality of

the fervour with which she embraced her husband, whilst speaking to him of the glad tidings from Egypt? Monsieur Gagnière's case against Maria Caroline is that her private life was chiefly remarkable for vicious extravagances, that she had for years amused herself with shameful *liaisons* under her husband's connivance, and that her monstrous immoralities, of which *he* knew every particular, had caused Ferdinand for many a year to despise her, though he was too vicious himself to hate her with honest hatred. Monsieur Gagnière even requires us to believe that Ferdinand made no secret of the sense of loathing with which he regarded the wanton creature to whom he was fettered by the bond of marriage. 'Il n'ignorait,' says the French *littérateur*, 'rien de sa vie,—n'étant pas assez pur lui-même pour la haïr,—il la méprisait à fond . . . . Il manifestait publiquement, à son approche, comme un dégoût insurmontable, en prétextant l'odeur des cheveux rouges de la reine.' Yet this queen, so lost to common decency and so repulsive to the King, who declared his dislike of her so grossly, could write to her closest confidante and confederate in guilt of the embraces she and her husband had exchanged. No Englishman is likely to believe Monsieur Gagnière's monstrous story.

Never more amusing than when he is exceptionally stupid, and never more dull than when he tries to sparkle, Monsieur Gagnière discovers additional evidence of the Queen's extreme foolishness in the concluding words ('Faites moi voir votre* héros ce soir') of her impulsive letter of felicitations to the

* The Queen wrote 'notre.'

British minister's wife. In a foot-note to these words, Monsieur Gagnière remarks contemptuously, 'Evidemment en effigie, car Nelson était encore devant Alexandrie.' This French satirist is comically in fault in imagining that Maria Caroline pointed to Nelson in the words thus exhibited to ridicule. As she writes, '*vos* heros, les defenseurs de l'Italie,' and 'je verrais *nos* heros ce soir,' in previous passages of the emotional letter, it is probable that 'notre héros ce soir' was a slip for 'nos héros ce soir,'—the heroes alluded to being Captain Capel, hastening with Nelson's despatches overland towards England, and Captain Hoste (afterwards the famous admiral) of the brig *Mutine*, in which vessel the bearer of the despatches had made the voyage from Egypt to Naples. Whilst writing the hasty letter, Maria Caroline looked forward to the pleasure of receiving both or at least one of these heroes in the evening. To Her Majesty at that moment all the officers of the victorious squadron were 'heroes,' though Nelson was of course the chief hero of them all; and, instead of begging Lady Hamilton to bring the chief hero (still before Alexandria) to the Palazzo Reale in the evening, Maria Caroline was only declaring her desire to see that very evening one or both of the heroes, then in Naples.

What attentions Maria Caroline lavished on the young captain of the *Mutine*, Monsieur Gagnière can learn from the 'Memoirs and Letters of Sir W. Hoste,'—a work that does not appear to have been put in his hands when he was invited to study 'Angelo's Reminiscences' and the 'Memoirs of Lady Hamilton.'

That both Captain Capel and Captain Hoste paid a visit to the Royal Palace within a few hours of their arrival in Naples appears from the last-named officer's letter to his mother. On leaving the palace, the two sailors were met by Lady Hamilton, who, taking them into her carriage, drove with them through the crowded and clamorous streets of Naples till dark, the nature of the news from Egypt being declared to the populace by the words 'Nelson and Victory,' that appeared in gold letters on the bandeau which Emma wore on her forehead. After dark, when bon-fires and other illuminations caused the thoroughfares of the capital to be thronged with England's well-wishers, the people of the French party stayed at home. At the opera-house, the favourite play-room of French insolence, whither the two captains of the British Navy went with Sir William and Lady Hamilton, the absence of French cockades from the theatre was noticed by the party in the British ambassador's box. Emma's bandeau had driven the cockades from 'the house.'

Staying only one night in Naples, Captain Capel resumed his journey for England on Tuesday, September 4th, 1798. But it was Captain Hoste's good fortune to be fêted by the Neapolitans as 'the hero of the hour' till he dropped out of chief notice on Nelson's arrival in the bay. A few days after his first visit to Maria Caroline's palace, Captain Hoste was waited upon by an officer of the royal household (probably the gentleman in attendance, known as 'the favourite of the guard') who brought him a note and diamond ring from Her Majesty, together with

two hundred guineas to be distributed amongst the English brig's company. At the same time, six pipes of wine and two calves were sent to the *Mutine* for the better cheer of her crew. A few days later, the Queen's courtesies to the fortunate brig were acknowledged in the fittest and most graceful manner by the captain, who 'dressed the *Mutine* completely in colours' on the anniversary of Her Majesty's birth.

On the 22nd of September, 1798, the Neapolitans went forth upon the dancing waters of their bay to meet the conqueror of the Nile, and welcomed him with an enthusiasm that could not have been more animating and impressive, had he been an admiral of their own race, who had won his great victory with Maria Caroline's ships. There is no need to tell again (*vide*, 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, c. I.) how Nelson entertained the King of Naples on board the *Vanguard*, and how Emma Hamilton on coming to the hero's presence threw herself 'into his *arm* more dead than alive.' With undisguised fury Garat saw the victorious squadron enter the port, regardless of the clause of the Franco-Sicilian treaty, that forbade more than four British ships of war to enter a Sicilian port at the same time. This open violation of the treaty was the more galling and humiliating to the French ambassador, because the conqueror's ships were followed into the harbour by the battered and flagless French vessels, which he had beaten and taken captive. Garat would have shown greater discretion and finer care for the dignity of the French republic by veiling his chagrin with silence; for by protesting against the infringement of the treaty, and

demanding an explanation of the affront offered to his Government, he only provoked an answer that brought the blood to his cheeks. He was told with sarcastic politeness that Admiral Nelson had demanded anchorage for his ships, and recent events—indeed, the very procession which stirred the citizen Garat so profoundly—showed that the English admiral knew how to enforce his demands. 'No apology nor explanation' says Colletta, 'followed for the public demonstrations of joy at the success of the enemy.' Surely no explanation was needed for demonstrations which explained themselves so precisely. The Neapolitan royalists went wild with joy because the French republic was in adversity, and the Neapolitan Jacobins had been silenced.

Elated by the destruction of Buonaparte's Egyptian fleet, Maria Caroline conceived that the moment had arrived, when she might clear the papal states of the enemy who, from the date of Berthier's triumphal entry into Rome, had filled her with apprehensions for the safety of her own capital.

Rulers are judged by the success or failure of their enterprises. It is especially so in war, whose glory is all for the victorious, whilst the vanquished reap nothing less bitter than humiliation. Because Maria Caroline's scheme for driving the French northwards into the teeth of an Austrian army, who should overwhelm them, resulted in Mack's fiasco, the whole affair has been ridiculed as no less contemptible in design than disastrous in results. Had the issue satisfied the Queen's hopes, she would have been extolled for military genius. For the failure of the project

she has been derided as a prodigy of feminine foolhardiness. Yet the essay, which covered her with ridicule, might have redounded to her honour. More may be urged in behalf of the Queen's sagacity in this particular business than will ever be admitted by the commonplace idolaters of success.

In secret alliance with England, Austria, Russia, and the Porte, Maria Caroline had strong friends. She had an army which, though it had no large experience of actual warfare, comprised regiments that had distinguished themselves in the field, and had won the respect of the best captains of Europe. There was a feeling in both Germany and France that the Italians of the south would surpass the Italians of the north in martial address and achievement. The courage and physical strength of the Neapolitans were universally recognized. Mack's 'fiasco' was followed quickly by events, which corrected the first and most erroneous notion that the general's miscarriage was due to the cowardice of his men. Maria Caroline had no reason to mistrust the valour of her people, and to fear they would turn and run, as soon as they should be brought face to face with the enemy. Whilst her confidence in the martial ability of her subjects was reasonable, she cannot be charged with folly in conceiving that the moment was favourable for the execution of her long cherished design. Buonaparte and the flower of the French army were boxed away in Egypt, and must remain there for some time. Weakened and discredited by internal dissensions and for the moment incapacitated by poverty for another great military

enterprise, the Directory was fast losing its hold on the respect and confidence of the Parisians. From her agents in Paris the Queen was receiving assurances that, if she struck her enemy one quick, sharp, strong blow, now that the French were disheartened by Nelson's grand success in Aboukir Bay, the blow would be followed in a trice by a northward march of the forces which had for months caused her so much uneasiness.

She even received assurances from Paris that, if she seized the happy moment, and threw an imposing army into the Pope's dominions, it was questionable whether she would encounter any resistance whatever from the army of occupation. By dispelling the superstitious notion that Buonaparte was invincible and the French republic exempt from grave disaster, by rousing the enthusiasm for England and whipping to fury the popular animosity against France, the battle of the Nile had created a moral atmosphere that would be most favourable to her troops. In so exhilarating an atmosphere her army would take the field, confident of victory. Six months hence, Buonaparte might have returned from Egypt, French affairs might have recovered themselves, and the excitement so auspicious to the Neapolitan forces would have subsided. Under these circumstances, Maria Caroline was not unwise to raise the cry of 'War against the French.' She did not rush upon her fate in insolent contempt of the signs of the times. She sent her soldiers to the field—with favourable omens and on due consideration.

Whilst making up her mind for war, Maria Caroline neither underrated the possible difficulties of her enterprise, nor neglected to take precautions against misadventure. Discounting the sanguine assurances of her agents in Paris, she laid her plans on the assumption that their reports were too flattering. She strained every nerve to accomplish all that her allies could require of her. Levying forty thousand fresh conscripts, she raised her army to seventy-five thousand men, and no pains were spared to drill her raw recruits into smart soldiers.

To stimulate the enthusiasm of her soldiers by a display of personal interest in their exercises, Maria Caroline stayed with her court for successive weeks at San Germano, where the larger part of the new levy was encamped. During these sojourns in the camp she rode or drove through the lines attired in military costume—a blue riding-habit garnished with gold fleurs-de-lys at the neck and buttons of dull gold, and a generalissimo's hat surmounted by a white plume. Whether she caracoled on a charger or drove in a chariot drawn by four horses, she was attended by a brilliant suite of ambassadors from friendly powers, barons of her realm, and glittering aides-de-camp. Emma Hamilton was often by Her Majesty's side on these occasions; and after his return in October from Malta, whither he had sailed after three weeks of disorderly repose at Naples, Nelson appeared more than twice or thrice in the Queen's carriage at a review of her troops. It was at San Germano that Nelson exclaimed disdainfully

'This fellow does not understand his business!', on seeing Mack surrounded by 'the enemy' at a mock battle.

Later in the year, when Ferdinand and Mack were already in Rome, and the brief war (if it may be styled a war) was going forward, Maria Caroline wrote a hasty letter, that is interesting as another example of the Queen's unreserved communicativeness to the British embassy, and also for its testimony to the source of our earliest information respecting Buonaparte's doings in Egypt at a critical moment:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[ ]

'My dear Miledy,

'I hope to return to Caserta on Monday to see my daughter-in-law and to recover myself a little before getting back to town. Yester-evening we received an express from Taranto, where a French brig has arrived with Louis Buonaparte, who has escaped the blockade. He set out on the 15th brumaire, and the devil who helps them in everything brought him here in twenty days. He carries despatches from his brother the General of the 12th brumaire, which are being copied and which the Chevalier [Hamilton] shall see. They say they have routed the Mamelukes, are in cantonment and want nothing. There is much in cypher, and [Louis] Buonaparte asks for curtailment of quarantine, and begs Lacombe to send him a secretary of legation to speak with, and another secretary that he may get on with papers, and that he himself may go express [en courier] to Paris. My poor advice has been to tell the Chevalier [Hamilton] everything, then to send the packet back to Taranto, saying that the position of affairs precludes this business of despatches, but that as he [Louis Buonaparte] came in ignorance of the state of the case we do not keep him prisoner, but cannot allow him passage through the kingdom; so that he may go his way, with my hope that he may be taken prisoner another time. If Chateau St. Ange should resist so as to make difficulties,

I should be disposed to keep him prisoner, as his name always causes effect. See my foolish advice! No news from Nelson, nor from anywhere. I live always in disquiet. If you would come with the Chevalier this evening at . . . . o'clock, I would assure you of my eternal gratitude and friendship. Adieu.' *

As Louis Buonaparte left Egypt on November 7th, 1798, and spent twenty days in the voyage to Taranto, it is clear that Ferdinand and Mack were enjoying their momentary triumph at Rome, when Maria Caroline dashed off this hasty letter for Sir William Hamilton's enlightenment. Yet Monsieur Gagnière overflows with indignation at the Queen's baseness in opening the despatches of an ally, and communicating their contents to the enemy of her dear ally, with whom she was herself at war.

As the autumn moved to its last days, and Austria showed no signs of coming promptly to her assistance, Maria Caroline's anxiety grew and deepened. Admonished by the emperor to continue her preparations till the spring, when it would be more convenient for him to put his armies in the field, she was entreated by some of her advisers to submit to her august kinsman's will, in consideration of the disasters that would ensue if her inexperienced forces should be routed by the veteran legions of France, before her nephew should have sent an army to help

* 'Si ensuite Chateau St. Ange resiste qu'il a des difficultes hostiles je croirois le retenir prisonier son nom toujours fesant effet Voila mon sot avis rien de Nelson rien de partout Je vis toujours en inquietudes si vous voulez venir a . . . heures avec le Chevalier ce soir vous assurer de mon eternelle recconoissance et amitie. Adieu.' The reference to Fort San Angelo is another indication of the time at which the letter was written.—J. C. J.

her. But to wait was to lose the happy moment and the reward of promptitude.

Three months more, Buonaparte might have returned from Egypt, the Directory might have arranged its dissensions and grown in popular esteem, and France have recovered from the shock of Nelson's blow. Delay was unendurable to the sanguine woman, who saw in it the death of her opportunity. Confident in the army which made a brave show at reviews and believing Mack's avowals that it was ready for the field, she listened to the opposing parties at the Council of State, and after a few days of hesitancy sided with the party whose counsel was most agreeable to her temper and ambition. She resolved to open the fray single-handed. At any risk she would not miss her opportunity of proving herself a worthy daughter of Maria Theresa. Even if events should disappoint her in the Pope's dominions, she could hold her own in them till the spring, when her nephew Francis would be sending forces to her assistance.

On the other hand, should she achieve her purpose, drive the French northwards, occupy Rome, and bring the Pope home to the Vatican, what glory would come to her! In what a position she would be for negociating with the Italian powers, extending the bounds of her husband's kingdom, and possibly putting herself at the head of a federation that in time's course would result in the united Italy, for whose creation she had offered so many prayers! Losing for a moment the lines which had been slowly deepening in its features ever since that awful close

of '93, her face glowed with exultation, as she surveyed all the possible consequences of a victorious campaign. Staking heavily she played for a grand prize,—the gratitude and admiration of all the sovereigns of Europe. She played for a still dearer prize,—the satisfaction of her vengeance on the republic that had slain her sister.

She might have won both prizes, had it not been for—Mack! It was not her fault that she had amongst her subjects no soldier capable of commanding an army. It was her misfortune that, instead of sending her a competent general, Vienna sent her a man who could not have been safely trusted with a brigade. To style Mack a military pedant would be to pay him a compliment, for a pedant must know the rudiments of his art. Southey remarked of this inauspicious general, 'All that is doubtful concerning this man is whether he was a coward or a traitor,' but Southey was wrong. In justice (and history owes justice even to Mack) it must be admitted that this Austrian general was neither craven nor treacherous. He was nothing worse than a taciturn, pompous, unsympathetic, frigid, phlegmatic fool.

Ignorant of Italian, he could never have touched the hearts of Maria Caroline's soldiers as the Corsican stirred the feeling of Frenchmen, and Nelson won the affection of his tars, even if he had been a military genius. To him the common soldier was a mere piece of mechanism. Powerless 'to move without five carriages,' he had no care for the physical capabilities of the men he commanded. Requiring them to march under heavy burdens twice

as many miles a-day as they ought to have marched, it was a matter of indifference to him how they fared at the end of each long day's toil. It was beneath the dignity of so great a commander to trouble himself about miserable details of the commissariat. The season during which he thus overworked his men was unpropitious. The rain fell in torrents, the roads were rotten, the nights were cold. Even the general, who travelled with five carriages and a king for his comrade, suffered from these inconveniences. Whilst Mack's particular column made for Rome in this fashion, the other columns of his army moved onwards with forced marches and scant rations—no one of the columns having any means of ascertaining the position, progress, fortune of another column.

At the outset of Mack's march upon Rome, the French forces belted the peninsular from sea to sea, lying in detached bodies, all ready to be beaten in patches by an able commander of a sufficient army. But instead of breaking their centre, cutting off their way of retreat to Piedmont, and attacking them in detail with superior numbers, Mack allowed them to draw together into a compact army, whilst he and Ferdinand thought only of getting to Rome, as though their mere occupation of Rome would give them the campaign. With military critics there is no question that the commander-in-chief, who handled his army in this style, with neither a centre of operations nor a base on which to retreat in case of misadventure, was the real author of the 'fiasco,' by which he is chiefly remembered in martial annals.

For a few brief days it appeared to Mack and

Ferdinand that, by occupying Rome almost without firing a gun, they had made themselves masters of the whole position. The alacrity with which the French, with the exception of the small garrison left in San Angelo, withdrew from Rome on the appearance of the Neapolitan army, confirmed the King and his comrade in this droll misconception. Mistaking a strategical movement for an orderly flight, they had no doubt that, in accordance with the forecast of Maria Caroline's Parisian correspondents, the French were in full retreat from the papal dominions. Fixing his quarters at his own palace, the Farnesina, Ferdinand during the earlier of his few days in Rome, busied himself with obliterating the signs of the republic. Sending intelligence to Naples of the flight of the French, he wrote on 29th November, 1798, to the Pope a bombastic letter, inviting His Holiness to return to his proper home. 'Leave then,' he wrote, (*vide,* Horner's 'Colletta,' vol. i, p. 255), 'your too modest abode in the Carthusian monastery, and like our Lady of Loretto borne on the wings of the cherubim descend into the Vatican and purify it with your holy presence. All is prepared for your reception; and your Holiness may celebrate Divine service on the day of our Saviour's birth.' Whilst these ludicrous words were being committed to paper, Ferdinand little imagined where and how he would himself spend the next Christmas-day.

Events followed one another quickly. Leaving Rome precipitately, on hearing that Championnet was hastening to Macdonald's assistance, Ferdinand

was in quarters at Albano on the 7th of December, 1798. Three days later (December the 10th), he was hastening back towards Naples in the same coach with the Duke d'Ascoli,—the two travelling companions having exchanged their outer clothes for the greater security of the sovereign, who is said to have made the homeward journey in lively fear of assassination. Three days later (13th of December), when the Neapolitans had been worsted in successive engagements, it was computed that Maria Caroline's army had lost nearly twelve thousand men (one thousand killed, nine hundred wounded, and ten thousand taken prisoners), to say nothing of the thousands whom sickness had disabled. The army had also lost thirty cannon, nine standards, many horses, and enormous quantities of *matériel*. Mack was in retreat, doing his best on the way (justice requires this admission) to lessen the disastrous results of his incapacity. But it was little he could effect to modify the misfortunes, for which Maria Caroline forbore to reproach him. The campaign of seventeen days closed with rout and stampede, that reduced the battalions, which the Queen had so lately reviewed at San Germano, to mere hordes of ragged runagates. The tardiest and weakest of the worn and famished vagrants were still making their melancholy way back to Naples, when Championnet, after restoring the republic in Rome, had started on his deliberate march to the capital, where he so speedily established the Parthenopeian Republic.

Though the news from her army had been less than satisfactory to her hopes, Maria Caroline was

far from imagining how ill matters would go with her grand enterprise, when she wrote this brief note to her friend:

Maria Caroline to Emma Hamilton.

[ ]

'My dear Miledy,

'I am more than consoled by the good news from Minorca. May the successes of your brave nation—our dear ally and defender, who will, I hope, still sustain us—follow one another without intermission . . . . Yesterday evening I received, thank God!, news of the king from Frosinone. He has arrived there happily. Messieurs, the republicans, have yielded to the summons and taken their departure. There have been a few shots fired, but without doing any harm at Vesuli (?) and at Terracina. They have sent an adjutant to Rome to tell them to be gone, and we shall see what they will do. The frightfully bad weather and the execrable roads cause us much inconvenience and give me extreme trouble. Leopold is here with me, ready to receive your kind attentions. I am longing to see you. I am your sincere friend for life.'

The intelligence that her husband had entered Rome in triumph, and that, with the exception of the small garrison of San Angelo, nothing remained of the French army in the sacred city, was no doubt even more agreeable to Maria Caroline than the recent news from Minorca. But ere the Neapolitans had ceased, or even fairly begun to rejoice over Ferdinand's 'triumph,' the news from Rome became less re-assuring to the Queen and her party. Soon couriers came to Caserta with letters that put lines of woe into Her Majesty's face. At the same time, other heralds of disaster—no couriers in royal livery, but varlets who had followed the army without any

purpose of fighting—whispered news about Naples, that caused the Jacobins to smile and rub their hands gleefully. In the clubs, to which these varlets carried their tales first, there were bitter jests on the latest turn of events. It was asked whether San Carlo would go to the expense of another illumination. Surely the *Te Deum* should be sung in the churches. The leaders of the Jacobin party remarked to one another ironically, 'It is time for us to arrange for the loyal reception of His Majesty and the army, when they return to us covered with glory!'

The worst news had not come to Maria Caroline, when bad news caused her to write this gloomy letter to her peculiar confidante:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[ ]

'My dear Miledy,

'I could not answer you yesterday, for I was too miserable. The king, thank God!, is well. I am sure he will not remain so, living in the midst of heart-breaking troubles and vexations of every kind. I pity him greatly and would fain be with him. Hitherto there has been no battle, and yet our troops behave very ill. This saddens and disables me. Great God! one cannot say what misfortune is coming. I am deeply troubled, and long all through the days to hear something more honourable. The good alone are ever to be the only sufferers. The Chevalier de Saxe (?) is severely wounded by two grape-shots and a musket-shot that passed across his body. Arcovito, Barco, and many others are wounded. Mack is in despair, and not without reason. Adieu! Thousands of compliments to the brave Admiral Nelson and to the Chevalier [Hamilton]. All this is between ourselves, for what is shameful to us will kill me with grief. Adieu! Pity me, pity my virtuous and sacrificed husband, and believe me, even to the grave, wholly yours.

'We will do everything, if these rascals should come *en*

masse. We will sacrifice life, everything. But if the people continue to fly like rabbits, we shall be lost. Thus the stay of the brave admiral, to whom I should in case of calamity be able to confide my children, will be a great blessing. We will do everything but debase ourselves. But my spirit is darkened. La Combe has received orders from me yesterday to take down his scutcheon, and on Monday he, his mission and all the French shall be sent from Naples.—Adieu !'

Let the reader weigh the terms of affection in which Maria Caroline speaks in this letter of her virtuous husband, of her lively compassion for him, and of her desire to be at his side; and, whilst weighing the words, let the student remember all Monsieur Gagnière's case (made of libels taken from previous writers) against the Queen's private life. According to Monsieur Gagnière, she was a hardened and shameful adulteress, whose intimacy with Emma Hamilton originated in her immoral sympathy with the fascinating Englishwoman. Let readers recall Monsieur Gagnière's disagreeable insinuations respecting this intimacy. Let it be remembered that, according to Monsieur Gagnière, Ferdinand knew every particular of his wife's alleged immoralities; that the Queen knew he despised her for her alleged viciousness, and made no secret of his dislike of her; and that as the Queen's peculiar confidante Emma Hamilton knew all that was most shameful in Her Majesty's life. Remembering all this, let the reader decide whether it lies within the possibilities of the most depraved human nature for such a woman as the Maria Caroline of Monsieur Gagnière's imagination to write to such a confidante as the Emma

Hamilton of his pages about the compassion, love and devotion she feels for such a husband as the Ferdinand of Monsieur Gagnière's book,—which is a noteworthy book for being a compendium of most of the libels written about the Queen.

Another point of this letter is noteworthy. From the postscript it appears that, before her husband's return to Caserta, and so soon after receiving the first tidings of disaster, the Queen was considering what should be done for the safety of her dear children 'en cas de malheur,' and had already determined to put them under Nelson's care with a view to their removal from the country. In this determination we see the germ of Her Majesty's eventual resolve to migrate from Naples to Palermo. The way in which Maria Caroline *communicates* her design for her children's withdrawal from danger *to* Lady Hamilton scarcely accords with Emma's subsequent assertion, that the removal of the royal family to Sicily was made at her instance.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MIGRATION TO PALERMO.

The Jacobins and the Lazzaroni—Antonio Ferretti's Assassination—Slanderous Story based on the Incident—Maria Caroline's Preparations for Retreat—Removal of Jewels and Money—Preparations for the Retreat at the British Embassy—Emma Hamilton's part in the Queen's Preparations—Royal Luggage—Passports for Embarcation—The Queen's Panic—'God protect us this Night!'—Preparations in which Lady Hamilton took no Part—Royal Embarcation—Stormy Voyage—Scenes on board the *Vanguard*—Reproachful Words or Looks?—Arrival at Palermo—The Queen's Indisposition—Sir William Hamilton's Illness—Maria Caroline's Concern for her Children—Reflections on the Retreat—Value of the Transported Treasure—Ferdinand's several Reasons for transporting it—His Nerve and Confidence—How Naples came to fall—General Manthone's Avowal—Fine Indignation of French Historians.

1798 A.D.

On 6th December, 1798, Nelson wrote from Naples to Earl St. Vincent, 'If Mack is defeated, this country in fourteen days is lost: for the Emperor has not yet moved his army, and if the Emperor will not march, this country has not the power of resisting the French.' These words were justified by incidents that followed quickly on the rout of the Neapolitan army. The Neapolitan Jacobins, whose spirits had risen with every fresh announcement of disaster to Mack's flying troops, were quick to put themselves in

communication with General Championnet, and implore him to hasten to the aid of their faction. Cognizant of the intercourse between the French general and those of the Neapolitans, who hoped to compass a revolution by a foreign occupation of the capital, the lazzaroni and meaner bourgeoisie seized every occasion for declaring their hostility to the Jacobins. As the Jacobins grew more eager for revolution and the lazzaroni more disposed to riot, the police lost nerve from want of confidence in the government, and disinclination to offend the faction that might soon have authority over them. Collisions between the lazzaroni and the Jacobins became frequent, some of them resulting in loss of life. One of these fatal affairs gave occasion for a wild calumny against Maria Caroline.

One of the King's messengers, named Antonio Ferretti (spelt 'Ferreri' by some writers), who had become an object of suspicion with the lazzaroni, was passing along the sea-shore, when he was pursued by a furious crowd. A few minutes later, he was thrown to the ground and stabbed by many daggers, whilst the air resounded with passionate cries of 'Death to the Jacobins!' Wounded and disabled this victim of popular wrath was still alive, when his assailants, attended by an enormous crowd, dragged him beneath the windows of the royal palace, and cried aloud to the King, to come forth and witness the death of a traitor. Stepping forth on a balcony in order to pacify the mob, Ferdinand was no less horrified than astonished to recognize in the dying traitor one of his own dependents. This ghastly affair was

alluded to by Nelson, when on the 28th December, 1798, he wrote from Palermo to Lord St. Vincent,—

'From the 18th, various plans were formed for the removal of the royal family from the palace to the water-side; on the 19th I received a note from General Acton, saying, that the King approved of my plan for their embarcation; this day the 20th and 21st, very large assemblies of people were in commotion, and several people killed, and one dragged by the legs to the palace. The mob by the 20th were very unruly, and insisted the Royal Family should not leave Naples; however, they were pacified by the King and Queen speaking to them.'

What ground the mob had for thinking Ferretti a Jacobin, and murdering him as a traitor to his master, will never be known. The story, by which the Jacobins accounted for the affair, was this: That to induce the King to throw his army into the papal states, Maria Caroline and Acton had shown him a forged letter, purporting to have been written by the Emperor Francis II., and giving assurance of the prompt departure of the promised troops; that after his return from Rome to Naples ('dès son retour à Naples,' says Monsieur Gagnière), Ferdinand had written strongly to Francis, demanding to know why the latter had failed to keep the promise; that Antonio Ferretti was the courier, chosen by the King to carry the fervid epistle to Vienna, and was returning to the Palazzo Reale with the Emperor's answer, when he was murdered by a mob, acting at the instance of Maria Caroline, who knew that if the imperial reply came to her husband's hands, she would have but a poor chance of maintaining her

authority over him. To prevent a disclosure, that would be so injurious to herself, the Queen caused the faithful messenger to be assassinated. The whole story was made of lies. Ferdinand was not deceived by Acton and the Queen in the alleged manner, and she was no more the cause of Ferretti's death than of Buonaparte's expedition to Egypt. As the King did not leave Albano till 10th December, and on his return went to the Queen at Caserta before coming to Naples, the interval between his re-appearance in Naples and the messenger's assassination was so short, that the murdered man could not have made the journey to Vienna and back in the time. He was not returning *to* the royal palace *from* Vienna or any other place, when the mob seized him. On the contrary, he had only just left the Palazzo Reale, and was on his way *from* the palace with a royal despatch to Lord Nelson, when he was struck down and stabbed. The fable has long been disregarded by serious historians. Though he refers to the tale, Colletta disdains to use it for the Queen's discredit. Yet, in order to blacken the unfortunate Maria Caroline, Monsieur Gagnière reproduces the absurd story, with an offensive affectation of tenderness for the Queen's honour.

'Nous n' irons pas,' he says, 'jusqu' à dire—comme les contemporains—que Marie-Caroline ait ordonné la mort du malheureux courrier. Les puissants ont rarement besoin de descendre jusqu'au détail du crime ; on devine leur pensées. Le fait indéniable est que l'infâme Pasquale (dont le nom est resté à Naples comme synonyme de monstre) prépara une émeute

factice pour le retour de Ferreri' (*i.e.* Ferretti). There is no decent testimony that Pasquale was in any way accountable for the riot.

Championnet being already on his way towards the capital which the Neapolitan Jacobins had promised to deliver into his hands, and the populace of the capital having begun to raise riots and commit murder within the verge of the royal palace, Maria Caroline and Ferdinand were both of opinion that they should lose no time in withdrawing from Naples to Palermo.

For this retreat Maria Caroline had for several days been making preparations. Under her personal superintendence, servants, who possessed and deserved the Queen's confidence, had been packing valuables, that in the hours of darkness were removed either straight to the docks, or to the British Embassy —whence they passed through Lady Hamilton's hands to Nelson's keeping. Whilst this work was being done at the Palazzo by the Queen and her most reliable domestics, similar work was accomplished at the British Embassy, where Lady Hamilton and the ever industrious Mrs. Cadogan helped Sir William Hamilton to pack the more valuable part of his vases and other *objets d'art*, that in due course arrived in London, and also the less valuable portion of his treasures, that went to the bottom of the sea in the *Colossus*. Prudence would alone have caused the Queen and Emma to keep away from one another during this perilous time, even if they could have found leisure for personal intercourse. Though they may have kissed one another on the evening of

December 19th, it is questionable whether the two strangely assorted friends exchanged embraces between December 16th, 1798, and the evening of their embarcation, which was effected with fortunate secrecy on December 21st, 1798. But in the interval they exchanged several letters. From certain of the Queen's extant epistles (first published by Dr. Pettigrew in slightly different English) one sees how subordinate a part Lady Hamilton played in that 'removal of the court.'

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[December 17th, 1798.]

'My dear Miledy,

'Since Thursday we have heard nothing from Mack from either the high or low Abruzzo. This causes me to live in agony and incessant fright (et en continuelles transes). I venture to send you this evening all our Spanish money, both the King's and my own. They are sixty thousand gold ducats. It is all we have, for we have never hoarded. The diamonds of the whole family, both men and women, will arrive to-morrow evening, for consignment to the honourable admiral Lord Nelson. The General [Acton] has already spoken to him of our money, but that is for paying the troops, navy, &c. In brief, cowardice, treason, fear, the general consternation and the total lack of vigor fill me with dread and make me wholly miserable; but I would fain discharge my several duties even to the end. Adieu! my compliments to the Chevalier and the honourable Milord, our liberator. Preserve your friendship for me. You give me so many proofs of it! And believe me to be, for life, your sincere friend.

'Saverio, a faithful and staunch man, goes with this money. This letter was written yesterday, but knowing of the *fête* at Nizza's house, I was unwilling to send you anything, for fear of inconveniencing you. I will do so this evening and send you everything,—jewels, money, and

necessary things, for our misfortune drives us. Our people are cowards, infamous, execrable creatures. Acton's brother has arrived and tells horrors. Mack is in despair. I am in grief and bewilderment. Adieu! My compliments to the hero Nelson—to him and his brave nation; I blush for the infamous cowardice of my own. Wholly, for life and death, yours.'

Together with the date, there appears on the envelope of the letter this memorandum in Lady Hamilton's handwriting, 'My adorable unfortunate Queen! God bless and protect her and her august family! *Dear Dear Dear Queen!*'

Compare the passages of this letter, that relate to the removal of the jewels and gold, with the passages touching the same business in 'Lady Hamilton's Statement' (1811), printed in the third and last part of this book. Emma Hamilton's story in 1811 was that she herself removed the treasures from the Palazzo Reale. 'I, however,' she says in the *Statement*, 'began the work myself and gradually removed all the jewels and then thirty-six barrels of gold to our house . . .' There was no gradual removal of the jewels and gold. They seem to have been sent all together on the same evening, the Queen having relinquished her purpose of sending them on two successive evenings. Instead of removing them, Lady Hamilton only received them, when they were sent to her *by* the Queen. Observe also how, whilst sending to Lady Hamilton the things of value which Emma in later time claimed credit for removing, Her Majesty sent them at the time when it was most convenient for Lady Hamilton to receive them.

The next consignment of goods, made by Maria

Caroline *to* Nelson through Lady Hamilton's hands, consisted of three trunks of linen for the royal children, and a little box of other clothes. Here is the letter that accompanied these goods :

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[18th December, 1798.]

'My dear Miledy,

'Behold three more portmanteaus and a little box. In the first three there is a little linen for all my children for use on board, and in the box some little petticoats (des petites jupes). I trust I am not imprudent in sending them to you. The remainder of what can go shall go by a Sicilian vessel, as I do not wish to inconvenience you . . . . Believe me to be for life your grateful and faithful friend. I hope to see you to-morrow evening with our dear and precious admiral.'

On the envelope of this brief note Lady Hamilton wrote : 'Dec^br^ 18th, 1798.—Unfortunate Queen!'

Here again observe how careful Her Majesty is to forbear troubling Lady Hamilton with articles that could be sent by a Sicilian transport,—one of the vessels in which the Queen's goods were being embarked without Lady Hamilton's aid.

Whether this hope of seeing Emma Hamilton and Nelson on the morrow evening was gratified is uncertain. But it is conceivable that the three had a meeting, and that Nelson then took occasion to inspect the subterranean passage, through which he, two evenings later, conducted the royal party to the barge.

More boxes—great trunks and small portmanteaus —of clothing for the royal family came to the British

Embassy the next evening, together with another letter.

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[19th December, 1798.]

'My dear Miledy,

'I abuse your goodness and our brave Admiral's goodness. Let the great boxes be thrown in the hold and the little ones be near at hand. It is so, because I have unfortunately an immense family. I am in the despair of desolation and my tears flow incessantly. The blow, its suddenness have bewildered me, and I do not think I shall ever recover from it. This blow "me plongera," and the astounding effect will accompany me to the tomb. Please, dear friend, let me know everything, everything. Rely on my discretion. My son has returned from Capua, and tells horrors of the flying troops . . . . Adieu, my dear, the horrible ruin ends two-thirds of our existence. I would commit myself to the Divine Providence et me ferois une raison. But the moment is cruel, is deadly. Give my compliments to our estimable liberator. Adieu! a thousand compliments. All my gratitude is devoted to you.

'P.S—In addition to the great list of persons for embarcation, I shall make a special list which will bear a billet, written after the model which I send you, the bearer of which I pray you to embark and save on my responsibility.'

The specimen-passport to which the Queen refers may be seen at the British Museum. For showing how Maria Caroline herself attended to the details of the arrangements for the flight, the postscript of the last-printed letter is noteworthy. Drawing up the list of persons to be embarked, she even settled the form of the particular passports.

On the same day Emma Hamilton received another letter, in which the Queen expresses in signifi-

cant terms her wish to cause her 'instrument' as little inconvenience and trouble as possible.

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[19th December, 1798.]

'DEAR MILÉDY,

'The dangers increase. Aquila is taken with six hundred men, to the everlasting shame of our country. Mack writes in despair. The weather seems favourable, and therefore the king is urgent [to depart]. I am in bewilderment and despair, as this changes entirely our estate, being, life and position—everything that shaped my ideas and those of my family—for life. I do not know where my head is. This evening I will send some other boxes and clothes for my numerous family and myself, for it is for life. Tell me frankly whether I may send our trunks this evening to the dock by a trusty man, Lalo or Saverio, or whether a transport should be able to convey them, or whether it will cause trouble. In that case I will take other measures. Thousands of compliments to our saviour. The most wretched of women, mothers, queens, but your sincere friend.'

The Queen would scarcely have written in this style to Lady Hamilton, had the latter been taking upon herself all the trouble of 'the packing.'

The letter, now to be submitted to the reader, appears in Monsieur Gagnière's book under this explanatory note,—'Sans date, mais du 20 Octobre, veille de fuite.'* The embarcation was made on the even-

* Students of Monsieur Gagnière's book should read it with caution. Maria Caroline made two voyages on board Nelson's flag-ship—(*a*) the voyage on board the *Vanguard* from Naples to Palermo in 1798, and (*b*) the voyage on board the *Foudroyant* in the summer of 1800, from Palermo to Leghorn. On both occasions Her Majesty wrote Emma letters about luggage, for embarkment. Monsieur Gagnière prints one of the epistles, touching the later voyage, as though it were one of the earlier set of letters.

ing of 21st December. The letter, like most of Maria Caroline's letters, was undated, but on the envelope of the epistle appears in Emma Hamilton's handwriting this brief and significant note, 'December 21st, 1798—God protect us this night!'

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[21st December, 1798]

'My dear Miledy,

'The popular tumults [attended with] the slaughter of people are a sure indication of more mischief to come. That will grow daily, and I tremble at the atrocities that will be perpetrated by a people, who do not defend themselves against the enemy, but will allow themselves all the horrors of the most unbridled licence. The agreement with our liberator stands. I rely upon it, and abandon myself to him with ten innocent members of my family. My heart is dying with grief. See the list of the unhappy persons, who have a passport from me; 'on pourroit, n'osant rien dire avant, par mechanceté ou vengeance les oublier.' The emigrants are slain—the language of the people is seditious—in brief, everything points to a frightful catastrophe. My compliments to you all. My soul is torn and my heart bleeds. The unfortunate Maudets are powerless to save themselves; have compassion on them. The unfortunate Vanni killed himself this morning with a pistol-shot. How much do I reproach myself!

'Note of the persons for embarcation,—Monsieur Lalo, Vincenzo Morra, Giuseppe Castrone, Emanuele de Domenicis, Giusepe Haup, Francesco Baldassare, Giachino Diaz, L'abbé Labdam, and others to whom I may on the moment give a passport. My suffering is for others; my own peril does not frighten me.'

From these letters it appears how greatly the part actually taken by Emma Hamilton in the preparations for the migration from Naples to Palermo differs from the part she imagined herself to have taken in

those preparations, some twelve years after the event. Having decided on the flight, Maria Caroline arranged the whole affair, apart from matters necessarily determined by Nelson's judgment. Packing with her own hands or the hands of her confidential domestics, the money, jewels, trinkets, clothes, that were carried from the Palazzo Reale to the British Embassy for embarkation on the *Vanguard*, Maria Caroline caused the trunks, boxes and cases to be taken out of the royal palace in the hours of darkness by her faithful yeomen, Lalo and Saverio. Settling who should join the migration, she drew out the lists of the favoured persons, and even settled the form of the tickets by which they would get admission to a vessel bound for Sicily. Removing no single thing of value from the palace, Emma Hamilton only received the boxes and cases sent to her by the Queen, and dealt with them in accordance with the Queen's orders. On this point the evidence of the letters, written by Maria Caroline on the days immediately preceding the embarcation, accords with the evidence of the letter, written by Nelson to Lord St. Vincent on 28th December, 1798, two days after the royal party landed at Palermo. 'Lady Hamilton,' Nelson wrote in this letter, 'from this time to the 21st, every night *received* the jewels of the royal family, &c., &c., and such clothes as might be necessary for the very large party to embark.' It has been alleged that Nelson subsequently wrote to Lord Spencer, 'Lady Hamilton seemed to be an angel dropt from heaven for the preservation of the royal family'; but as the allegation rests at present on nothing better than a very

suspicious passage * of 'Lady Hamilton's Statement' of fictions, the Admiral may, at least for the present, be held guiltless of writing the extravagant words. Years had to pass, before Emma could imagine herself to have whisked the King, Queen and all their court away from instant destruction, and carried them in the palm of her hand to Sicily. A mere instrument, she allowed years to slip away, before she affected to have been anything more than a subordinate agent in carrying out the Queen's 'orders,'—as the adventuress of '98 and '99 used to style the directions, given to her by Maria Caroline.

It is bootless to conjecture what inconveniences and disasters Maria Caroline and Ferdinand escaped by their timely retreat to Sicily; but as I remarked in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' it is conceivable that, had they remained in Naples, 'Ferdinand and Maria Caroline would, like Louis and Marie-Antoinette, have died by the executioner.' Whilst thinking thus of the perils, from which Maria Caroline retired, readers may with perfect consistency reject the hysterical extravagance of the fanciful writers who require us to believe that, because she was serviceable to the Queen in the preparations for the retreat, Emma Hamilton is to be applauded for saving Maria Caroline from the scaffold.

* This suspicious passage of 'Lady Hamilton's Statement' runs thus,—'In his letter to Lord St. Vincent or Lord Spencer, he' (*i.e.* Nelson) 'says on that occasion, "Lady Hamilton seem'd to be an Angel dropt from Heaven for the preservation of the Royal Family."'—If Nelson wrote a letter, containing these words, to either Lord St. Vincent *or* Lord Spencer, the letter does not appear in Sir Harris Nicolas's 'Despatches and Letters.'

At the close of 1798, Maria Caroline was not so destitute of friends, that in the absence of Lady Hamilton she could not have possibly got her trunks and cases of valuables put safely and secretly on board Nelson's ship. As it was, the Queen did, without Emma Hamilton's help, all the difficult and dangerous part of the work,—in getting the valuables safely and secretly moved out of the palace by means of Lalo, Saverio, and other trusty servants. That Maria Caroline was in no want of faithful servants, who could be trusted to convey boxes of treasures to the dock, without publishing what they were doing, appears both from her letters to Emma Hamilton, and from the fact that, whilst sending to the British embassy her jewels, gold, and the clothing of her family together with such articles as they would need during the passage, she was sending larger, though perhaps less valuable packages, to the Sicilian vessels, that in due course formed part of the twenty sail of merchantmen and transports, which sailed to Palermo under the convoy of the *Vanguard*, the *Archimedes* (a Neapolitan 74-gun-ship of the line), and the *Sannite* corvette, commanded by Francesco Caracciolo. Works of art and other precious things appear to have been conveyed from the Caserta palace to the Sicilian transports. It was reported that the most valuable antiquities and *objets d'art* were at the same time removed from the museums to Neapolitan vessels; and it is certain that large sums of specie and much precious metal in bar passed at the same time from the mint and banks to the *Vanguard*. All this work could not have been accom-

plished secretly in the course of a few days and nights, had not Maria Caroline and Ferdinand possessed a strong force of men, ready and able to work for them with zeal and also with silence. Moreover, it was in Maria Caroline's power to make the voyage to Palermo without troubling Nelson to take her and her family on board the *Vanguard*. Francesco Caracciolo, in no degree disposed to be a traitor at that time, was acutely pained by the Queen's resolve to make the passage in the English admiral's ship, instead of making it in the *Sannite*. One may, therefore, be pardoned for smiling at the romantic fervour of the essayist, who in May 1888, assured the readers of 'Blackwood's Magazine' that 'the world owes it to her' (*i.e.*, Lady Hamilton) 'that the sister of Marie-Antoinette did not share her horrible fate—that another head, as fair as that which fell into the basket of sawdust in front of the Tuileries on the 16th November *(sic)*, 1793, did not roll on the scaffold at Naples in 1799.'

Coming on board the *Vanguard* at nine p.m. of 21st December, 1798, under the circumstances set forth in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' Maria Caroline and Ferdinand passed two dreary nights and two long days in the bay, whilst a wind, that would have borne them gaily to Palermo, blew steadily from the north-east. At length in the night of the 23rd, when some two thousand fugitives from Naples had come on board the transports, merchantmen and ships of war, the *Vanguard* moved out to sea, and after clearing Capri encountered the violent storm, that scattered the fleet of heavily-laden vessels, and

for a time seemed likely to disable the Admiral's noble ship. The wind having chopped in a trice from east to west, a violent blast from the west-south-west struck the *Vanguard*, rending her topsails, driver and foretopmast staysail to ribbons. Whilst the ship laboured heavily in the angry sea, confusion and panic seized the courtiers, who thronged about the royal party in Nelson's state-cabin.

From the birth of this terrific gale to its subsidence, Emma Hamilton, an excellent sailor, displayed some of her most valuable qualities. Taking to her arms the younger of the royal children, who were cordially attached to her, she fondled them with the tenderness and dexterity of a woman who had herself been a nursemaid. Cheering them with kisses, she carried them off to their berths. The babes having been disposed of, Lady Hamilton hastened to the Queen (whose attendants were all prostrate with sea-sickness) and waited upon her like a servant. On the morning of the 25th, just as the storm was abating, a more painful duty devolved on the British minister's wife. Seized with fatal illness, that originated in sea-sickness, Maria Caroline's youngest (seven years old) child, the Prince Albert, languished throughout the day in Lady Hamilton's arms, and died in her embrace during the evening. On the following morning, the *Vanguard* glided into the harbour of Palermo, where the Queen and princesses went on shore so early as five a.m., under the personal escort of Nelson, who attended them to the royal palace.

The accounts of what passed on board the *Vanguard* are numerous and contradictory. By writers

who seize every opportunity for exhibiting Ferdinand and Maria Caroline to contempt, it is averred that, when the storm burst upon Nelson's ship, the King had the unmanliness to reproach the Queen to her face, and in the hearing of the many people who thronged the Admiral's state-cabin, with being the cause of his misfortunes. But for her, he is said to have screamed with every sign of disdainful wrath, he might still be reigning at Naples, and sleeping tranquilly in his bed. Getting no sufficient relief from the utterance of such reproaches, he went on to swear like a heathen, or the lowest of his beloved lazzaroni. 'Ferdinand,' says Monsieur Gagnière, 'assez gai jusqu' alors, entra dans une colère furieuse contre sa femme et Acton. Il déchargea son cœur, en lui reprochant toutes ses fautes . . . "elle était la cause de tous ses malheurs . . . . Sans elle, il régnerait encore à Naples et dormirait paisiblement dans son lit." La face empourprée, il criait comme un possédé, "Madame, madame, voilà où devait nous conduire votre folie d'ambition! . . . . vous nous faites tous périr!" . . . . Tout à coup, sans raison, il se prit à sacrer comme un païen, ou mieux encore comme un de ses lazzaroni. "Monsieur," dit la reine, "vous blasphémez." Il ne répondit rien, mais, repartant de plus belle, il défila le répertoire varié et sonore des quais napolitains.' For this choice piece of description, Monsieur Gagnière gives Colletta as his chief authority. But Colletta's statement is that the angry king reproached his consort and minister with indignant glances,—

'The royal family themselves believed their final destruc-

tion near, and when the Queen was told that the Infant Don Albert had died, she answered, "We shall all shortly rejoin my son"; whilst the king, praying with a loud voice, and promising large gifts to St. Januarius and St. Francis, cast indignant glances at the minister and his consort; thus reproaching them with the acts of his past government, which had been the cause of his flight and misfortune.'

Horner's Translation of the '*Storia di Napoli*,' vol. i, p. 272.

That Ferdinand showed by his looks how rudely recent events had shaken his confidence in Maria Caroline's discretion is conceivable; for a letter, of which more will be said on an ensuing page, affords strong evidence that the opening of the New Year found him strangely mutinous against the Queen's authority. But to reproach with looks is widely different from reproaching with violent speech.

After landing at Palermo, the Queen and Emma Hamilton saw little or nothing of one another till the end of the year. On entering her palace, with nerves shaken and energy exhausted by the sufferings of the voyage and the painful agitations of many previous days, Maria Caroline placed herself in the hands of physicians who treated her violent head-ache and cold on the chest in a manner that would not be sanctioned by doctors at the present time. The delicate and shattered woman was physicked and bled. Whilst the Queen was undergoing this regimen, Lady Hamilton had enough to do in settling herself in a new home, and ministering to her husband, who had suffered even more than Her Majesty from the roughness of the passage. But though they could not meet, the friends exchanged letters. On Friday, December 28th, Saverio brought Lady Hamilton a letter in

which the Queen begged for certain cases, containing the clothes, which she and her children would need next Sunday, when they would 'have to receive many people.' It seemed to the writer an age since she had seen her dear Emma. 'So many troubles,' wrote Her Majesty, 'have quite shaken me, my spirits are much depressed; I am in despair. I have been bled, but my head and chest are very bad, and I am good for nothing, but nevertheless I shall see you with great pleasure.' How did Miledy like the house which Her Majesty had recommended her to take? A day or two later, Emma Hamilton received another note of affectionate assurances from the Queen, who had no dearer friend than the Cheshire blacksmith's daughter.

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[ ]

'MY DEAR MILEDY,

'It is a long time since I had any news of you, the worthy Chevalier and our brave Liberator. My health is always suffering, but the fever is less. My heart and mind suffer so much from all I undergo that I think I shall never recover. It is not death that I fear. I have lived through too much for that at least in the last two or three years. But my poor children!—that is the reason why the tempest, which has enveloped us, has not overpowered me. But I have no wish to pain you. Tell me if your house is a good one, if anything is needed by you or our Saviour; for the only pleasure for which I, being good for nothing, still live, is to render service to my friends, and amongst them I rate you highly. From two o'clock till the evening, I will gladly see you at any hour you like. Adieu! My compliments to the Chevalier and to our dear virtuous brave Admiral, and believe me to be your very tender true attached friend.'

Hard words have been spoken of both Ferdinand

and Maria Caroline in respect to their withdrawal from Naples to Palermo at a time when the Neapolitan Jacobins were rising for revolution, and Championnet was marching on Naples, with the knowledge that the Jacobins of the capital would open its gates to his victorious legions. This retirement of the royal family from Naples, where they would soon have been at the mercy of the enemy within and the enemy without the walls, to the Sicilian capital, where they were alike safe from the French army and the Jacobin insurgents, has been denounced as a cowardly and impolitic desertion of a suffering nation. Was it a desertion or a cowardly flight in any fair sense of the terms? Surely the king, who at such a crisis withdrew his family and court from the part of his dominions, where they were in imminent peril, to a part of his dominions, where the people, from the highest nobility to the lowest peasantry were enthusiastically loyal to his cause, cannot be said to have deserted his continental subjects. Leaving at Naples a regent (the Prince Francesco Pignatelli) to act for him in his absence, he left at Naples a powerful fleet, which promised him the means of constant communication with his Neapolitan subjects. He was of opinion that at Palermo he would be in a better position for organizing resistance to the French, than if he withdrew from Naples to any of the Neapolitan provinces. Should the Jacobins of the capital achieve their revolutionary design, he was of opinion that he could direct operations for the recovery of the capital more effectively from Sicily than from any point of the peninsula. Events soon justified both of these

opinions. The King, who on grounds so fully justified by subsequent events withdrew from revolutionary Naples to loyal Palermo, cannot be fairly charged on that account with deserting an innocent and disordered nation.

Something must be conceded to the charge of cowardice, at least so far as Maria Caroline is concerned. The Queen's letters put it beyond question that she lost her nerve and self-possession at a moment of extreme trial to both. Bewildered (to use her own expression) by the disasters of Mack's ignominious campaign, she was seized with panic on learning from her police that the Jacobins of her capital were in communication with Championnet, and on seeing the populace grow fiercely riotous. The revolution, which she had so long repressed, was now rising upon her. The tiger that thirsted for blood was on the point of making its fatal spring. It is scarcely a matter for reproach that Marie-Antoinette's sister turned pale, and trembled for herself, and that her queenly courage perished for awhile under the tortures of maternal solicitude.

But whilst Maria Caroline was shaken by momentary terror, Ferdinand, whose manliness had been evoked by recent events, displayed no ignoble alarm. Averse to the notion of leaving Naples, he delayed his departure till it seemed needful for the safety of his wife and children. Even when he had consented to his wife's scheme and Nelson's counsels for the retreat to Sicily, he was thoughtful for the future, and declared he would not leave Naples without carrying away the greater part of the treasure,

that, in case of a revolution, would fall into the hands of the Jacobins, and, in case of a French occupation, would be seized by Championnet. Knowing that he should need it, not only for his dignified subsistence in Sicily, but certainly for organizing resistance to the French, and most likely for the recovery of an insurgent capital, he insisted on carrying off the specie and bars of precious metal from the treasury and the banks. After being fixed for the evening of the 20th of December, the embarcation was delayed for twenty-four hours, in order that this chief part of the gold and silver should be carried on board, in accordance with the King's requirements.

In other respects, Ferdinand kept a cool and clear head when Maria Caroline was bewildered and panic-struck. Whilst she conceived of herself as leaving Naples for the last time, and flying to Sicily for the remainder of her life, he looked forward to nothing more than a brief residence in the island. It speaks more for his coolness than for his regal honour, that he could despatch a message from the *Vanguard* to the master of his kennel, directing that certain dogs should be shipped promptly to Sicily, where they would be needed for sport. Throughout the ensuing weeks he displayed the same self-possession and confidence in Fortune. The news that Naples had fallen only moved him to remark that it would in due course be recovered. A month or two later, when the weak and distinctly unheroic Francesco Caracciolo implored the leave of absence, under cover of which he went over to the Jacobins, Ferdinand

remarked, in a significant tone, to the Commodore, 'Beware of intermeddling with French politics, and avoid the snares of the republicans. I know I shall recover the kingdom of Naples.'

Authorities differ respecting the value of the treasure that passed from Naples to Palermo with the royal family. In the letter which he wrote to Lord St. Vincent from Palermo, on the 28th of December, 1798, Nelson appraised the treasure at 'full two millions five hundred thousand pounds sterling,' and I am not aware of any grounds for thinking this appraisement excessive; but of course Emma Hamilton had no personal share whatever in the removal of the larger part of this enormous amount. She was only concerned as a subordinate instrument in the removal of such cases and chests as the Queen sent to her from the Palazzo Reale, which were of trivial bulk and worth in comparison with the valuables that were shipped without her help.

It is absurd to charge Ferdinand with plundering the nation because he put so vast an amount of treasure beyond the reach of the Jacobins and the French. Leaving the kingdom of the nearer Sicily under Prince Pignatelli, Ferdinand left the regent with means and powers that would have proved adequate for the defence of the capital, had not the Jacobins compassed a revolt within its walls before the arrival of the foreigner. Though withdrawn from the kingdom of the nearer Sicily, the treasure in the King's hands would have been available at Palermo for the defence of Naples against the French, had not the revolutionary Neapolitans rendered the gallant

resistance of the lazzaroni alike brief and futile. That the Jacobins of Naples played this treacherous part is incontestable.

It was their boast that Naples fell, not from want of money, but because they gave her into the hands of the enemy. 'Citizen General,' said General Manthonè, a chief of the Jacobins (*vide* Horner's 'Colletta,' vol. i, pp. 300, 301), in reply to Championnet, when the latter had spoken of Naples as a conquered city, 'you appear to have forgotten that neither have we been conquered nor are you a conqueror; that you have not entered this city by battles and victories, but by our aid and consent; that we gave you the castles, and betrayed your enemies for the sake of our country; that your weak battalions were not able to conquer this vast city; nor would they have succeeded in retaining it, had we separated ourselves from you. To prove the truth of my assertion, leave these walls, and then return if you can.' These words, spoken by a Jacobin, who a few months later died for his treason, are a sufficient answer to the writers who insist that Naples fell because Ferdinand left her without the means of resistance. What blame to Ferdinand and Maria Caroline, that they withdrew as much as possible of their own and the nation's treasure from the reach of such treacherous subjects?

Recalling how the French liberators dealt with the Neapolitans, how Championnet rifled their pockets before Faypoult robbed them of their clothes, the student must be strangely wanting in humour who can refrain from laughing outright at the fine, virtu-

ous indignation with which the French historians speak of the enormous larceny by which Ferdinand saved two millions and a half of treasure from the extortionate agents of the indigent and rapacious French Directory.

CHAPTER XIX.

LOSS AND RECOVERY OF NAPLES.

No News from 'dear Naples'—Maria Caroline's Discontent—Ferdinand's Mutiny against her Sway—She ceases to be Autocrat—Bad News from 'dear Naples'—Birth of the Parthenopeian Republic—Championnet and Faypoult—Loyalty of the Provinces—Calabrian Emissaries to Palermo—Cardinal Ruffo in Calabria—The 'Army of the Holy Faith'—Brigands and Scoundrels—Fra Diavolo and Gaetano Mammone—Mutual Ferocity of Republicans and Royalists—Macdonald's Manifesto—Austrian Victories—French Reverses—Mantua invested and Milan threatened—Macdonald withdraws his Army from Naples—Encampment at Caserta—Macdonald's Words of Farewell—The Dupes he left behind him—When *will* the French Fleet come?—Nelson in the Bay of Naples—Collapse of the Parthenopeian Republic—Recovery of the Capital.

1799 A.D.

On the first day of 1799 Lady Hamilton received a letter (printed in Pettigrew's 'Nelson') from Maria Caroline, who was uneasy about Sir William Hamilton's health. 'No news,' wrote the Queen, 'from my dear Naples. My compliments to our excellent Admiral. I much wish to have a quiet conversation with him about the defence of this island, for everything I see, hear and understand, deprives me of all tranquillity. I am neither consulted nor even listened to, and am excessively unhappy. I regret that

I did not go elsewhere with my children, and shelter myself with my family from events, which must inevitably occur from the line of conduct pursued; but one must submit to fate and die. I only grieve for my children.'

That Maria Caroline found herself of small or no account at the council-table, where she had for so many years been the chief power, points to Ferdinand's mutiny against her domination, and his resolve to rule as well as to reign, and be wholly quit of her authority. But this resolve was short-lived. Partly from his mental indolence and consequent aversion to business, partly from the influence of his weakened but not extinguished affection for the princess whom he had once adored, but in a greater degree from the influence of habit, notoriously powerful in the Bourbons, the weak king gradually fell again under the control of his consort. But though by her intimate knowledge of his foibles and her cleverness in playing upon them, she regained something of her old sway, Maria Caroline never recovered all her former power over her husband's nature and dominions. Ceasing to be an autocrat from the hour of Mack's fiasco, Maria Caroline never again enjoyed Ferdinand's unqualified confidence.

On coming to Palermo, the news from 'dear Naples' was far from pleasing to Her Majesty. Fomented and encouraged by the 'canaille of nobles,' the revolution was accomplished. Joining the insurgent leaders, the people had ranged themselves against the lawful government. Mack had disappeared and Salandra with his command of two thou-

sand five hundred men could do nothing. Castellamare and Salerno had accepted the revolution, and similar news might be looked for from Calabria. Writing of these things to Lady Hamilton on 19th January, 1799, Maria Caroline remarked passionately, 'I am so afflicted that I would rather the French entered Naples and stript these wretches to the last shirt, than see our own subjects, base animals, cowards, vain braggarts, conduct themselves in this fashion. I am in the greatest distress; . . . . *but in any case Naples must be reconquered and Sicily defended.*'

Later budgets of News from Naples were even more afflicting to the Queen, though she had her wish,—which was, of course, no sincere expression of feeling, but a mere utterance of fierce chagrin. Championnet was in Naples, and had placarded the walls with the manifesto of menace, containing the words, 'Who is the Capet who pretends to reign over you, by virtue of the Pope's investiture? Who is the crowned scoundrel who dares to govern you? Let him dread the fate of his rival, who crushed by his despotism the rising liberty of the Gauls!' Begotten of treachery and foreign invasion, the short-lived Parthenopeian republic was already in existence, and singing songs in praise of the liberty for whose favours the Neapolitans were to pay so dearly. For a few days of joyful madness, the children of the new republic were delighted to embrace their deliverers, the children of the ten-years old republic; but the delight died away when the Parthenopeians discovered the cost of the embraces. Championnet had well-nigh emptied the pockets of his dupes,

before Faypoult arrived to strip them to their last shirt.

Whilst they followed one another quickly in the capital, events succeeded events no less rapidly in the Neapolitan provinces, that had neither demanded nor accepted the republic, for whose needs they were being taxed so heavily. Had the people of the northern provinces been of one mind with the Jacobins of Naples, they would have been less venturesome and effective in harrassing Championnet's army in its march upon Naples. Had the southern provinces been enamoured of the kind of liberty that had been manufactured for them at Naples, Calabria would not have despatched emissaries to Palermo, entreating Ferdinand to send her arms, money, a few trained soldiers, and some leaders of authority, in order that she might rise effectually in his behalf. Colletta speaks of delays, arising from the King's distrust of these messages from his loyal provinces in the South. But the delays cannot have been long, for before the end of February, 1799 (just two months after the migration to Palermo), Cardinal Ruffo was in Calabria, where he found himself surrounded by bands of royalists, clamouring to be enlisted and drilled into an army, that should drive the foreigner from the country and sweep the republicans to perdition. Such was the royalist enthusiasm of the Calabrese, who according to Colletta comprised a larger proportion of republicans than any other part of the country, outside the capital, 'either because they desired to revenge the sufferings they had endured under the most oppressive form of feudalism, or be-

cause they retained in their rude habits and manners the virtues of a primitive and free state of society.' Yet, even in a soil so favourable to its growth, the Tree of Liberty had failed to strike its roots deep. Speaking of Calabria, Colletta admits that 'the proportion of republicans to that of their opponents in the whole state, may be computed as only ten in a thousand.' To say that the royalists of the Two Sicilies were a hundred times as numerous as the revolutionary party, would be to underrate the majority of individuals, who were either strongly attached to the monarchy, or at least wholly devoid of desire for a republican government.

No doubt, some of the bands, that flocked to Cardinal Ruffo, were bands of brigands, comprising a percentage of villains, who had experienced the discipline of the galleys. Guilty of murders done in self-defence, some of these adventurers had committed murder in cold blood. It was not for Ruffo to be curious about the history of any man who could handle cutlass or musket in soldierly fashion, and was ready to use either weapon in the 'good cause.' Provided a man could and would fight for the King, he had the two virtues, that for the moment appeared most lovely and honourable to this Prince of the Church. But, though he accepted the services of rascals and criminals, it would be a mistake to imagine that Ruffo's 'Army of the Holy Faith' consisted chiefly of arrant villains and desperadoes. For the most part it was made up of honest peasants, who with a susperstitious reverence for the Church and the King hoped to get to heaven eventually by

doing what the King and Church required of them.

In respect to moral worth and personal antecedents, the men who offered to fight for the King were neither better nor worse than the men who fought for the republic. Both parties employed scoundrels, and both were aided by honest men. In districts, where brigandage was almost a recognized profession, neither party could afford to reject disdainfully the overtures of brigand chieftains, whom an affront might divert to the forces of the enemy. Much obloquy has been thrown on both Ferdinand and Maria Caroline for employing, and even condescending to have personal relations with such caitiffs as Michele Pezza (the Fra Diavolo of successive Neapolitan civil wars), and Gaetano Mammone, the partisan miller, who is said on most questionable authority to have delighted in quaffing warm human blood from the skull, that was his ordinary drinking vessel. And it must be confessed that one does not like to think of the King and Queen addressing in terms of formal friendship the man, of whom such an atrocity could be even reported. Though he may have been, and no doubt was guiltless of the particular charge, which renders his name unspeakably offensive, Their Majesties suffer in historic credit from their complaisance to this miller of evil fame. And, even if he possessed some of the redeeming virtues of the operatic hero, Michele Pezza was not a person, whom we care to remember as possessing a share of Maria Caroline's confidence. But, before we can give the right amount of censure to the King and Queen for holding direct intercourse with individuals of such ill repute, we

must first ascertain how far the two chiefs of banditti deserved the opprobrium, and then ascertain how much of their actual misdeeds was known to the royal employers.

Fought with a few such partisans on either side, the Neapolitan civil war of '99 resembled other Italian civil wars in the atrocities perpetrated by both sets of combatants. Of the cruelties committed by the royalists there is no need to speak, for republican writers have taken good care to render them sufficiently notorious. But to show that the republicans dealt rather rigorously with their opponents, we may call attention to the following orders published by the French general, Macdonald, at a moment when matters were going against him:

'Every town or city in rebellion against the Republic shall be burnt and levelled to the ground.

'Cardinals, bishops, abbés, curates and all ministers of Divine worship shall be held responsible for acts of rebellion in the places where they reside, and shall be liable to the punishment of death.

'Every rebel shall be liable to the punishment of death, and every accomplice, whether lay or spiritual, shall be treated as a rebel.

'None are permitted to ring a double peal, and, wheresoever heard, the ecclesiastic of that place shall be punished by death.

'Whoever shall spread news adverse to the French, or to the Parthenopeian Republic, shall be declared a rebel and suffer death.

'The loss of life shall be accompanied with loss of property.'

(*Vide*, Horner's 'Colletta,' vol. i, p. 339.)

The rebels, against whom this proclamation was made, were Neapolitans fighting *for* their lawful King

against a republic, that some four months since had been established by a small number of the Neapolitans of the capital with the help of the foreign army. It was thus that the few tens of thousands of genuine Parthenopeian republicans dealt with the several millions of their fellow-countrymen. It was treason punishable with death, for anyone of their fellow-countrymen to spread news adverse to their precious republic. It was treason, punishable with death, for anyone of their fellow-countrymen to be the ecclesiastic of a place, where the people should ring a double peal. Yet, their republic had no sooner fallen than the Parthenopeian enthusiasts sent up a cry of horror against Ferdinand for declaring, that the individuals, who had by arms and with the aid of a foreign army upset his government and fought against his soldiers, were guilty of treason.

Cardinal Ruffo's 'Army of the Holy Faith' had in successive engagements shown its superiority to the Parthenopeian troops, and even demonstrated its ability to contend with the French veterans, when its spirits were raised by good news from the north and from the south. The Austrians had defeated the French at Stokach (March 25th), at Verona (March 28—30th), and at Magnano, on the 5th of April. Mantua was invested, and Milan was threatened. Numbering no more than thirty thousand men, the remnant of Scherer's army was faced by forty-five thousand Germans, who would soon be reinforced by forty thousand Russians. After taking possession of Corfu and the Ionian islands, the Russians and Turks had thrown thirty-two thousand soldiers on the coasts of

Italy. The Austrian victories were followed at no long interval by Macdonald's withdrawal from Naples. Pretending that they were suffering in discipline from the temptations of a luxurious city, the French general in April withdrew most of his forces from Naples and encamped them at Caserta, in order to facilitate the retreat on which he had determined. Suspected from the first by the more sagacious Parthenopeians, the purpose of this encampment at Caserta was soon revealed to the least intelligent of the rebels.

Even as Championnet had entered Naples in the name of liberty, Macdonald affected to retire from the capital out of tender regard for the freedom and independence of the new republic. In his farewell speech to the Provisional Government, the general reminded its members that, so long as it was protected by a foreign army, a state necessarily lacked the higher powers of liberty and all the dignity of a free nation. Naples no longer needed his assistance. All would be well with her if, in their devotion to Liberty, her children would only go forth and clear the country of Ruffo's banditti. He had therefore determined to bid them farewell, and afford them an opportunity for proving themselves worthy of the privileges accorded to them by France. But to guard against contingencies arising from misadventure in the field to the soldiers of the Neapolitan republic, he had determined to leave St. Elmo, Uovo, Nuovo, Capua, and Gaeta sufficiently garrisoned by French veterans. On May 7th, 1799, the army of occupation was marching northwards.

The action of France towards the Neapolitan re-

publicans from January, 1799, to May, 1799, may be described in few words. She duped, plundered, and then deserted them. On the departure of the French, the Parthenopeian leaders were filled with consternation. The nation, on whom they had imposed for some few months a kind of government that was distasteful to the sentiment and ill-adapted to the needs of the people, had risen in every district for the restoration of the monarchy. Events had proved the so-called revolution to have been no more than the revolt of a faction. Weeks had passed since Nelson's officers had recovered to Ferdinand the insurgent islands of the Bay of Naples. During the next few weeks the Parthenopeian leaders looked anxiously towards the sea for the appearance of the Brest squadron, that was known to have passed the Straits of Gibraltar. To them in their fast-failing fortunes it appeared just possible that this squadron might come to their relief. It was their one chance of escape from the universal consequences of unsuccessful rebellion. No wonder they held to this last hope. At length, from the heights of St. Elmo and the castles, a powerful armament was seen entering the bay. But it was not the French squadron. The ships were the ships of Nelson's command, who, true to his trust, was coming towards Naples in the execution of the terms of his orders from home and from Lord St. Vincent, which required him to fight the French wherever they could be found, and seize every opportunity for counteracting their designs on the Two Sicilies. In hastening to Naples, in order to wrest the capital from the French garrisons,

Nelson had hastened to the waters in which he seemed most likely to come upon the Brest squadron. Entering the bay just in time to annul the unauthorised arrangement for the evacuation of the Uovo and Nuovo castles,—to annul the treaty in precise accordance, be it ever remembered, with the law of nations,*—Nelson gave the *coup de grâce* to the Parthenopeian republic. The recovery of Naples was Nelson's work,—a work done by him in obedience to the spirit of his orders from England. The recovery of the capital was followed by the judicial punishment of the leaders of the revolt. In this work Nelson took no part. Having cleared the country of the French enemy, the Admiral left it to Ferdinand and his judges to deal with the rebels in accordance with Neapolitan law.

* I pass over this matter in a single line, and only refer as briefly to the just trial and execution of the treacherous Caracciolo, because I dealt so fully with both affairs in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, cc. iii and iv. No English historian of Nelson's conduct in the Bay of Naples is likely to repeat Southey's deplorable mistakes touching the traitor's trial and the capitulation of the castles. But let it not be inferred that I claim credit for putting those transactions for the first time in a true light. The credit of that great literary service is wholly due to two other writers,—first, and in by far the greatest degree, to Commander Jeaffreson Miles; secondly, and in a less degree, to Sir Harris Nicolas. Thanks are due to Mr. John Paget for popularizing the facts and arguments of these two writers, but he neither strengthened the arguments nor made a single addition to the facts of *their* perfect vindication of the Admiral's honour, in respect to this passage of his glorious career.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CHASTISEMENT OF THE REBELS.

The Queen hopes Naples may fall without Bloodshed—Her good wishes for Nelson—Misleading News of the Castles—An Affair of Dates—All that Maria Caroline asked of Nelson—Ferdinand declines to take her to Naples—Her Letter touching Caracciolo's Execution—Emma Hamilton's Note on that Letter—The Classes and Masses—Alternations of Severity and Mildness—Maria Caroline confesses herself *Inutile*—She remains in Sicily during 'the Chastisement'—Her Compassion for Prince Belmonte—Her Exertions for Prince Belmonte's brother, for Pignatelli, and Migliano—For Mercy's sake she entreats Emma Hamilton to help her—Acts of Charity and Services of Devotion—Historians at Fault—Excesses of Ferdinand's Chastisement of the Rebels—Greater Horrors of Murat's Chastisement of the Brigands—The 'humane Ferdinand' displays his 'Humanity'—Luigia Sanfelice—Her two Lovers—Story of her Treason, Trial, and Sentence—Luigia and the Ladies of the Court—Maria Clementina pleads in vain for Luigia—The King his own Master and Slave—His Lesson to meddlesome Women—Death of Luigia Sanfelice.

1799 A.D.

As they may be found in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, c. v., I forbear to reprint in this work those passages of Maria Caroline's letters, which show what measures she advised for rendering the Neapolitan Jacobins incapable of further mischief. But it is needful to produce those passages of the letters which exhibit the spirit which animated the

Queen towards the republicans at the moment of their defeat and during their chastisement.

Nelson had already been pressed to go with his squadron to Naples, when in a letter dated the 11th of June, 1799 (*vide*, Pettigrew's 'Life,' vol. i, p. 229), Maria Caroline wrote to him, 'Notwithstanding I have been so misunderstood there, I still regard the ungrateful city, and solicit your forbearance. I hope that the imposing force by sea, and their being surrounded on all sides, will be sufficient, without shedding blood, to induce them to return to their allegiance, for I would spare even my enemies (car je désire que cela ne coute point de sang, celui de mes ennemis meme m'etant precieux).' This is not the language of a cruel woman longing to wreak her vengeance on her fallen enemies. Up to that time, at least, Nelson cannot have been entreated to deal vindictively with Naples by the Queen, who could assure him that she sincerely hoped the expedition would be bloodless; the blood even of her enemies being precious to her. On the same day, the Queen wrote to Lady Hamilton, 'It would appear by this' (*i.e.*, an enclosed letter) 'that a second squadron had entered the Mediterranean. May it please God that they' (*i.e.*, Nelson's squadron and the *other* English squadron) 'should unite, and meet with the infamous republicans' (*i.e.*, the Brest squadron) 'and destroy them.' Though these words have been used as evidence of the Queen's ferocious animosity against the Neapolitan Jacobins, they certainly admit of no such construction. Maria Caroline was not 'wishing' thus devoutly for the destruction of

any of her own subjects, but for the destruction of the French armament, which had recently entered the Mediterranean, and was believed to be bringing relief to the Parthenopeian rebels. When the wish was put in writing, Nelson had not started for the second time on his mission for the recovery of Naples, but was searching for the French squadron.

A week later, when Nelson was still away from Sicily, searching for the Brest squadron, Maria Caroline wrote another note to Lady Hamilton, which has been used no less unfairly to the Queen's discredit:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[Palermo, 18th June, 1799.]

'MY DEAR MILEDY,

'On my return from the convent, I received the good news that the forts *have been partly taken* (*que les chateaux etoit en portion prise*),* although the rascals, notwith-

* Monsieur Gagnière discovers in these words conclusive proof that the Sicilian court was aware of the capture of the castles Uovo and Nuovo before Nelson set out for the second time, in June, 1799, for the Bay of Naples. But Monsieur Gagnière is strangely at fault. Instead of announcing the capture of the forts, Maria Caroline's letter of the 18th of June only passed on the cheering but, as it turned out, erroneous intelligence that the castles were 'en portion prise.' On the following day (19th June, '99) she wrote to Lady Hamilton, 'Les deux chateaux sont encore au pouvoir des rebelles.' So late as the 24th of June, 1799—the day on which Nelson entered Naples Bay—the Queen, at Palermo, had received no news from Naples of a later date than the 17th of June. On the 24th of June, 1799, she wrote to Lady Hamilton, 'The last letters from Procida are of the 20th, but from Naples of the 17th, and that at such a critical moment.' On the next day (the 25th of June), when she had heard something of Ruffo's treaty for the capitulation of the castles, the Queen wrote to Emma Hamilton, 'The Cardinal wrote nothing from the 17th to the 21st of this month, but to-day he writes very shortly to the General and not to us; he says little of the treaty, nothing of the operations, and names but slightly the persons he has ap-

standing proffered pardon, fought desperately at the palace, and wholly destroyed a part of it. Some of them have fled, and the people are meting out [imperfect?] justice to the rascals (le peuple fait des justices partielles sur des coquins). *There is need of a second 1st of August, another Aboukir, and our brave general.* Give me your good news. Be careful of your health; I am very uneasy about it. And rely on the inviolable attachment, and very sincere gratitude of your loyal friend, CHARLOTTE.—A thousand compliments to the Chevalier [Hamilton], and to the virtuous Admiral as much happiness and glory as I wish him!'

In his printed transcript of this hasty note, Monsieur Gagnière calls particular attention to the Queen's wish for another Aboukir, as though it were a superlatively atrocious sentiment. But, as Nelson was then at sea searching for a powerful French squadron that was believed to be making for Naples, the judicial reader will fail to discover anything peculiarly barbarous in Her Majesty's hope that the Admiral would destroy the hostile armament as completely as he destroyed the French fleet in Aboukir Bay.

The next day (19th June, '99) Maria Caroline wrote the following letter to Lady Hamilton, who noted the date on the envelope,—

pointed.' Observe these dates. On the 18th of June, 1799, Captain Foote, on drawing his forces up before the Castle Uovo, sent Captain Oswald to the French commandant of the fort with a written offer of conditions for its capitulation; Ruffo's unauthorized treaty for the capitulation of the two castles was not signed till the 23rd of June; as nothing in the way of evacuation of the two castles had been done, on the strength of the unauthorized treaty, when Nelson entered the Bay of Naples, on the 24th of June, the forts had not been taken on the same 24th of June; and on that same 24th of June, the court at Palermo knew nothing of what had taken place at Naples since the 17th of June. Yet, Monsieur Gagnière insists that on the 18th of June the court at Palermo knew that the forts had been taken at Naples some days before!

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[Palermo, 19th June, 1799.]

'My dear Miledy,

'I thank you a thousand times for your dear letter and I am much pained to learn of your inconvenience. Take care of yourself, my dear Miledy, and rely on my eternal friendship and gratitude. I return to you our dear Nelson's letter. May Heaven bless him as his great virtues deserve! I do not cease to pray and make prayer to God for him. Our news from Naples is still confused. The two Castles are still in the power of the rebels. May God grant that all may end well, and that we may have true tranquillity! Adieu, my dear Miledy. Come and see me when you are able, for I desire to assure you by word of mouth (de vive voix) of my constant friendship. Thousands of compliments to the Chevalier our good friend, and to the virtuous brave Lord our Liberator . . . . .'

On the 25th of June, 1799, the Queen wrote from Palermo to Lady Hamilton on board the *Foudroyant* in Naples Bay a long letter, in which she said, 'It is impossible for me to treat with such vile rebels (avec ces canailles rebelles dans le cœur). An end must be put to it. My hope still rests on the sight of the brave English squadron (la vue de la brave et valeureuse escadre anglaise et [*i.e.* est] mon espoir).' The Queen, who hoped that Naples would be recovered without the horrors of a bombardment, and that on the mere sight of Nelson's squadron the rebels would lay down their arms, does not write like a woman beside herself with vindictive rage. Should her hope be disappointed, and the rebels resist, the Queen wished Nelson to do no more for her than he would in a like case do for his own king. 'Finally, my dear lady,' the Queen wrote in words that have been

produced as evidence of her atrocious cruelty, 'I urge Lord Nelson to deal with Naples as if it were a rebel city in Ireland behaving in like manner.' One fails to see anything peculiarly revolting and diabolical in this desire that, under a contingency which Maria Caroline did not anticipate, Nelson would act for the King of Naples just as he would act for his own king.

On Tuesday, the 2nd of July, 1799, the Queen, at Palermo, wrote to Lady Hamilton on board the *Foudroyant*, in Naples Bay, a remarkable letter, containing some passages which should be considered deliberately by readers who would know the two women :

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[2nd July, 1799.]

'My dear Miledy,

'I have received with immeasurable gratitude your dear and obliging letters, three of Saturday and one of the day before, with a list of the arrested Jacobins, who are some of the most wicked that we have had. I have seen also the sad and deserved end of the unfortunate and mad Caracciolo. I feel most sensibly all that your excellent heart must have endured, and that increases my gratitude to you. I have seen all you say and I am penetrated with gratitude. From all that one sees and learns the disorder in unhappy and pitiable Naples is immense. For maintaining order a strong land force would have been needful. But still you, my dear friends, have done wonders, and I am gratefully sensible of your exertions. This evening, while I was writing to you, the Portuguese brig arrived with letters of the 30th, and the dear admiral's letters for the king. This has decided the king to start to-morrow evening, which has already cost and will continue to cost me many tears. The king does not think it well that I should go with him for the little time he expects

to remain there. In brief, he starts to-morrow evening . . . . I shall remain in great sadness, making my prayers to heaven that everything may succeed for glory and for real good. But I am deeply moved, and think much of what I desire and in the future ought to be. At present, my dear Miledy, I rely on your friendship to write me everything, for all my correspondents, seeing my want of influence (voyant mon inutilite) and fearing to compromise themselves, remain silent. But I hope that my good friend Emma will not forget me, albeit an exile at Palermo. This will be an epoch of my life. Do not imagine that I have been unwilling to come from any caprice. In this matter I have been controlled by several motives. No one wishes me there. Moreover, I fear to lessen the love and enthusiasm which the king will inspire, and which are not for me. In short, a thousand considerations of prudence have put upon me a duty which costs me dearly. I shall continue to profit by your friendship in addressing my different letters and telling people to bring you the [answers] for me . . . . CHARLOTTE.'

On receiving this letter, Emma Hamilton wrote upon its envelope, 'This from my friend, whom I love and adore! Yes, I will serve her with my heart and soul; my blood if necessary shall flow for her! Emma will prove to Maria Caroline that [an] humble-born Englishwoman can serve [her] Queen with zeal and a true soul, even at the risk of her life.' Had Emma Hamilton's intimacy with the Queen been what the French libellers represent, she would scarcely have written in this strain of her companion in immorality.

A few days later, Maria Caroline wrote to her friend in Naples Bay, 'I calculate that the King has arrived to-day, and I earnestly desire his speedy return, and above all that he will not put his person in danger, for bad people are numerous at Naples, and many will present themselves.' On the 7th of July, '99,

she wrote again in a strain of affection for the King to her most intimate female friend.

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[7th July, 1799.]

'My dear Miledy,

'I owe you thousands and thousands of thanks for your two letters, which I received last evening, much after time. I note in them every thing you tell me with so much friendship. At the time I am writing this, I think the king will have arrived at Naples, because, thank God! the vessel which left on the 5th of this month met him forty miles from Capri. That has consoled and quieted me. My attachment to his person, my zeal for his good, I dare even say my enthusiasm made me desire intensely to go to Naples. I was not able to obtain permission to do so, and my reason makes me feel it is for the best. Alas, they would, albeit with injustice, have attributed every thing to me from malice and a spirit of vengeance . . . . . In short, my dear Miledy, I have the misfortune to know thoroughly the Neapolitan nobility and all the classes, and I will always say the same,—only the *bourgeoisie*, the artizans and the most humble people are faithful and attached. The latter sometimes surrender themselves to license, but their sentiments are good. This conviction causes me to have no commission to give you, for I am determined on returning to Naples to live entirely isolated from the whole world,—the experience of the thirty-one years, during which I have lived to oblige everyone and to find myself deserted, having made an impression that will never be effaced. I am ready to return to Naples the moment the king shall wish it . . . . We go daily to [sing] a *Te Deum*, to pray and carry in procession the Holy Sacrament, to bless the sea and to pray for the King and Naples. It is all I can do, and I do it willingly, because for all else I am useless (car au reste Je suis inutile). Adieu, my dear Miledy, continue to send me your news . . . . Poor Belmonte has received from another quarter intelligence of his brother's arrest; he is greatly afflicted, more for seeing him guilty than for all else. One sees only the unhappy and that makes one miserable . . . .

Charlotte.'

Observe what the Queen says of her attachment to the King and of her zeal for his welfare at a time when she is acutely sensible, of her 'inutilité,' resulting from his loss of confidence in her. Had her life and relations with her husband been what Monsieur Gagnière represents, could the Queen have written of him in this strain to Emma Hamilton? Observe what the Queen says of her own daily religious exercises to the woman, who according to Monsieur Gagnière was her confidante in immorality. Observe, also, the hint given in these last words to Emma Hamilton, that she is to use her influence in behalf of a rebel, whose case is more particularly noticed in a subsequent letter of the Queen's writing:—

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[Palermo, 18th July, 1799.]

'My dear Miledy,

'I am deeply stirred and grateful for your letter. I am glad your head-ache is over and that your health is better. I can well imagine how ill at ease you are on board ship, and that increases my immeasurable gratitude. I see with great pleasure the constant demonstrations of the attachment and loyalty of the faithful people. I never distrusted that class, and I am not deceived . . . . . I shall answer Madame San Marco one of these days. My heart, which never changes, moves me to do so; but I confess that I have felt keenly the neglect of my friends (dont elle ne peut laver entierement).—With respect to the affair in question, I am infinitely grateful for what you tell me. I am greatly interested in the matter, because I see it is killing with grief and chagrin an honourable man who is in affliction, either from his affection for the unfortunate man, or still more from his shame at having such ungrateful and infamous relatives. I see it is shortening and consuming the life of a greatly honourable man. That moved me to speak to you about it, without his

knowledge. But* as soon as I saw the man was arrested, and moreover charged in a list to the king, I regarded the affair as settled. He must undergo his lot, which in my opinion will be imprisonment on Pantellaria, since there are so many leaders, that one would come to him only by hanging by hundreds . . . . he having neither fought against the king, nor been a leader, nor made any execrable print. From that time I have, therefore, left him to his fate, and I beg you to treat him like the others.'

In a second letter of the same date, still insisting that the rebel's life must be spared, Maria Caroline wrote in Italian to her confidante on board the *Foudroyant*:

'If they send a hundred to the gallows, I have calculated that they will come to him, but if they hang only fifty, he cannot be of the number, his offence not being similar. I will neither speak nor think more of the matter, and I only regret having caused you the least embarrassment for his sake.'

As these passages have been made the foundation of a charge, that Maria Caroline abandoned the poor man to his fate, though she admitted his innocence of the most serious offences, it is well to put the matter in a true light. A feather-brained noble, brother of the Prince Belmonte who stood high in the Queen's

* The words of the original letter at this point run thus,—'Mais d'abords que jai vus l'home arette et surtout donne en note au roi jai conté l'affair termine et il subira son sort qui sera a ma croyance un maritimo Pantellaria en ayant tant de premier chef que l'on n'arrivera point a pendre par centaines et il en faudroit au moins tant pour que la chose arriva jusqu'a lui avec justice n'ayant ni combattus contre le Roi ni ete chef ni fait aucun execrable imprime. Depuis alors donc Je l'ai abandonee a son sort, et Je vous prie de le traiter come sont des autre . . . .' The reader who takes the trouble to compare these words with the 'copy' of the same passage in Monsieur Gagnière's book will see how far students should trust to the accuracy of the French *littérateur's* printed 'transcripts' of Maria Caroline's letters.

esteem, was discovered to have served and aided the republic in a subordinate capacity. This fact came to the Queen's knowledge (probably through Emma Hamilton) before the culprit had been denounced to Ferdinand. Seeing how acutely his brother suffered from shame and grief, the Queen, without aggravating the Prince's anguish by telling him her purpose, moved Emma Hamilton to exert herself for the culprit's advantage. Probably, the Queen hoped that her confidante would contrive to keep the culprit's offence from Ferdinand's knowledge, by compassing the omission of his name from the lists of traitors submitted to the King. That Emma Hamilton strove to do Her Majesty's will in the matter, appears from Maria Caroline's expression of infinite gratitude 'for what you tell me.' But the culprit's arrest had been followed, too quickly for the Queen's humane purpose, by his official denunciation. His name had already been notified in a list to Ferdinand, who was just then in no humour to pardon culprits at his consort's prayer. Hence, the obstacle to the Queen's wish, and the momentary failure of Emma's action in the rebel's behalf. What does the Queen do under these circumstances? Everything she could do, to save the unfortunate man's life. By pointing out to her confidante, how greatly the man's case differed from the case of a person, who had fought or written against the King, or figured as a leader of the revolution, Maria Caroline instructed Emma Hamilton how to put the culprit's offence before the King in a way least likely to nettle His Majesty's jealousy of dictation, and therefore most likely to be serviceable to

the offender. Affecting to ask no particular favour for the prisoner, she only wished him to be treated like other offenders, of the same degree of culpability. The guilty man, whose cause the Queen affected to have abandoned since the commencement of actual proceedings, must of course be sent to the islands. Written 'ostensibly' to Emma, the discreet letter was also written for Ferdinand's eye.

Instead of troubling herself no more about the culprit, Maria Caroline so managed matters that the traitor was placed on board the *Culloden* in the custody of Nelson, who promised the Queen to do his best for him. This appears from the letter in which the Queen covered the Admiral and Emma Hamilton with thanks for their successful action in the matter. The postscript shows how the pathetic letter was smuggled into Emma's hands under cover of an envelope, directed for secrecy's sake by Mrs. Cadogan's pen. Writing coldly and even harshly about the culprit in letters that might come under Ferdinand's eye, Maria Caroline gave the rein to her tenderness and feminine sensibility in the secret epistle which he would not see. Here is the womanly epistle:—

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[. . . . July, 1799.]

'My dear Miledy,

'All I could say and declare to you would but feebly express what your letter has made me experience. You have restored life [and] reason to a most honourable man, whom shame and the conflict between honour and affection were killing. Do you accept my most sincere thanks for it, as well as the hero Nelson—a man who has as

much feeling as he has courage. Nothing can be better for the unfortunate man than to remain on the Culoden (*sic*) under the mantle and protection of the most generous of men, and of the most sensitive and dear friend that I have. Thus the affair is entirely remitted to you, and whatever you shall do or think will certainly be for the best. I therefore entirely quit myself of the matter, with a gratitude that one can only feel—never express. Could you, my dear friend, have seen the unfortunate B[elmonte] with his deathlike countenance weep, as he moistened my hand with scalding tears whilst kissing it, on reading the note of the compassionate and virtuous admiral, and asking pardon for his weakness weep again, you would have been overcome with emotion. You have rescued him from the tomb. This man would have died of grief, through affection [and] attachment to his erring brother, and the shame of being pointed at with the finger [of scorn]. I am convinced that you have saved his life. Take my everlasting thanks for it, and believe that my gratitude will endure as long as I shall live. It is like drawing the knife from the heart of a man, honourable, attached to his duties, but [ ] sensitive. I see Cassano is arrested; I think it just and expedient, but he is too personally my enemy, for it to occasion me the slightest feeling of satisfaction. I am also quite convinced that if the brave, just and firm Lord Nelson had been Vicar General, everything would already be in order. I am so sensible of and grateful for all you do, that my whole life will be insufficient to prove it to you. You tell me nothing of your dear health or of what occupies your heart. I am vividly interested in everything. I repeat that I leave the affair of the Count G. B.* . . . . wholly in your friendly care. The assurance of the virtuous Admiral and your friendship afford me a perfect surety. Then, yet again, thousands and thousands of thanks as well as assurances of "boundless gratitude!" Adieu! Tell the dear Lord Nelson with your heart all that my heart knows not how to express, and do

* I am doubtful whether this letter is P or an imperfectly-formed B. The Count was, no doubt, the same brother of the Prince di Belmonte, for whom the Queen had exerted herself so effectually.

you, both my dear friends, believe me to be attached to you for life.—Your grateful friend,

'CHARLOTTE.

'P.S. I send this letter under your mother's envelope: and the other I write openly wholly to you (et lautre Je lecris ostensiblement toute a vous.')

Prince Belmonte's brother was not the only offender in whose behalf Emma Hamilton was entreated to use her influence on board the *Foudroyant*, which had become the seat of Ferdinand's government. On the 28th of July, 1799, when she was looking eagerly for the return of the *Foudroyant*, 'which would restore so many dear persons' to her, Maria Caroline wrote to Lady Hamilton:

'I send this evening a letter to the King and General [Acton] from the unfortunate Pignatelli. Should the king on his return, in consideration of the recovery of Naples, grant pardon to him, and also to Pepe (?) and Migliano [ ]. These three unfortunate men have done amiss, but are not Jacobins, though the appearance is the same. People have been saying that seven months of disgrace ought to suffice for the satisfaction of the allies. I beg from your good heart a good word in their behalf, should the tutelary hero, Nelson, approve. The General Pignatelli demands that they take information against him [*i.e.*, put him on his trial] at Naples. For myself I believe him to be a devoted and loyal man, who has been confounded by so many horrors. Pardon me, my dear miledy, but you love (?) [to do good] to others; it is a pleasure to you. Thousands of compliments to the Chevalier [Hamilton] and to our dear virtuous Lord [Nelson]; and believe me for life, your attached and grateful friend.'

Whilst Ferdinand was doing at Naples the grim work of which his humanity, according to Sir Archibald Alison, was incapable, the Queen, who accord-

ing to the same historian did the grim work with gusto in her own person, remained in Sicily, living in strict seclusion, paying no visits except to the churches and religious houses where she rendered prayers and thanks alternately to the King of kings. Until she took some slight part in the preparations for the annual *fête* of St. Rosalie, and for the rejoicings at the King's return, Her Majesty, throughout the long and anxious weeks, found her chief consolation in caressing her children, and corresponding with Emma Hamilton. No doubt some of the letters she sent to the adventuress comprise passages that grate on the feeling of readers, who like to think of women as uniformly mild to their assailants and forgiving to their enemies. Whilst dwelling on those passages, it is impossible for such readers to think tenderly, difficult for them to think with fairness of the Queen, who, sitting in her cabinet at Palermo, wrote so bitterly of Migliano 'the fool,' the Signora Migliano 'the viper with an infernal tongue,' and others of the wretched men and women who had been concerned in the 'wicked rebellion.' But the prevailing strain of the letters is sympathetic and compassionate. Sending Emma Hamilton money for distribution amongst the wretches of the capital, Maria Caroline shows herself no less pitiful for others than mindful of her own woes. 'I send you again,' she wrote to Lady Hamilton on 20th July, 1799, '600 ducats to bestow as your benevolent soul suggests upon the unfortunate who need it, certain that it will be dispensed appropriately, for I know your heart.' Ten days later she wrote to her friend

on board the *Foudroyant*, 'I beg of you to be so good as to distribute as you think best these thousand ducats which I send you. There is, besides, that Luciana who calls herself Fortunata, [and] another big common woman called Piete del Pesce, near the statue of St. Janaro in the New Street.'

It is significant of Maria Caroline's generous placability, that after writing bitterly of individuals, who had offended her deeply, she writes soon afterwards to Lady Hamilton in their behalf. Though she despised Migliano for being a 'fool' and 'vulgar courtier,' and loathed his wife for being 'a viper with an infernal tongue, a woman who had openly defamed the Court and the Government, and had been one of the strongest female pillars of the aristocratic rebellion,' she entreated Lady Hamilton to do her best to get a pardon from the King for this viper's foolish husband. On 7th July, '99, she wrote to Lady Hamilton of Madame San Marco. 'I wrote to her several times to come, both from the *Vanguard* before starting and also from Palermo, but she did not come. Notwithstanding all her hatred of me, she has never been imprisoned. Manthone, Perusier, the husband of Madame Della Rocca, San Angelo, Piscarelli are all amongst her friends. This compels me to silence. Should Madame San Marco be in need of money, she can rely on me to help her during all her life, but all the ties of interest and friendship between us have been broken by her conduct.' Eleven days later, however, the Queen had so far relented towards this lady of the court, who had deserted and calumniated her, and allied herself with the chiefs of the revolt,

as to promise to write to her. 'I will answer Madame San Marco one of these days,' she wrote to Lady Hamilton on the 18th July, '99. 'My heart, which never changes, impels me to do so; but I own I have felt acutely the neglect of my friends.' With the exception of Lady Hamilton, no Englishwoman resident in the Sicilies at this time, had better opportunities for studying Maria Caroline's conduct, and taking a true view of her disposition and acts, than Miss Cornelia Knight, who, whilst living with the Hamiltons, acted for several months as Emma Hamilton's confidential amanuensis. 'The Queen,' says Miss Knight in her 'Autobiography, 'who has been accused of so much vindictive cruelty, was, to my certain knowledge, the cause of many pardons being granted. And there was one lady in particular whom she saved, who was her declared enemy, and at the head of a revolutionary association.'

That they could describe the Queen as residing at Naples and personally directing the trials and executions during 'the chastisement,'—that they could speak of Ferdinand as retiring from 'the chastisement' before the trials and executions began, in order to escape the sight of horrors unutterably repulsive to his humanity,—that they could depict Maria Caroline and Lady Hamilton as revelling in those horrors and lapping human blood with tigrine delight,—shows how little reliance should be put on the statements of the writers who misled Southey and Alison.* Instead of being at Naples during 'the

* Let a note remind the reader of Alison's words :—'The King whose humanity could not endure the sight of the punishments

chastisement,' Maria Caroline was living in seclusion in Sicily, spending the greater part of her time in labours of charity and religious exercises. Feeling strongly that the chastisement was needful, she lamented the necessity, and far from aggravating its horrors, she used her diminished power to lessen the punishments of particular individuals. Instead of retiring to Palermo in obedience to the instinct of humanity, it was the mild Ferdinand who stayed in Naples to administer justice.

Southey's and Alison's misleading 'authorities' were either strangely mistaken, or darkly mendacious. It is difficult to imagine them to have been unaware that Maria Caroline was at Palermo when they declared her to have been torturing and slaying her husband's subjects at Naples, or ignorant that Ferdinand was directing the chastisement at Naples, when they represent him to have been living sorrowfully in Sicily, because nature had denied him the sternness requisite for the work,—which he actually performed. It is less difficult, but still far from easy, to imagine they were ignorant that Maria Caroline was no longer omnipotent in her husband's dominions; that Mack's 'fiasco' had put an end to her autocratic sway over the Two Sicilies; that she was still only beginning to recover a portion of the authority which

which *were preparing*, returned to Sicily and left the administration of justice in the hands of the Queen and Lady Hamilton. Numbers were immediately condemned and executed; the vengeance of the populace supplied what was wanting in the celerity of the criminal tribunals; neither age, nor sex, nor rank were spared; women as well as men, youths of sixteen and grey-headed men of seventy, were alike led out to the scaffold, and infants of twelve years of age sent into exile.'

the fiasco had for a time extinguished; that Ferdinand was still set on ruling as well as reigning, and that, in his impatience of his wife's control, and his resolve never again to fall under her domination, he was more likely to traverse than consent to her wish on any question touching the treatment of Parthenopeian rebels. How little power Maria Caroline had, and conceived herself to have, over the King at this moment appears from the fact that, when she desired to get pardons for Pignatelli, Migliano, and another culprit of illegible name (? Pepe), she did not herself advise Ferdinand to grant the pardons, but entreated Emma Hamilton to use her influence with the King for the end in view.

Authorities differ as to the number of the individuals who were executed at Naples for taking part in the Parthenopeian revolt. Speaking from Nelson's papers, Clarke and M'Arthur were of opinion that 'the number of traitors who in consequence suffered at different times, after being regularly tried and condemned by the law of their country, amounted to about seventy persons.' Republican writers have put the number higher; but even Monsieur Gagnière, who does his utmost to lengthen the list of the sufferers, admits that the unhappy people who suffered capitally did not number more than one hundred and one. Let Monsieur Gagnière's computation be taken as accurate, though I am far from thinking it is so.

In passing judgment on such a chastisement, the reader must have due regard to the enormity of the revolt, and its antecedent circumstances. The work of a violent faction, that had for years disturbed the

metropolis by incessant and insidious efforts for revolution, the Parthenopeian republic was established by an act of heinous treason. It was the boast of the leading Neapolitan Jacobins that, at a time of supreme national disaster, they had taken arms against their fellow-citizens, and opened the gates of the capital to the French army. With the help of the foreign invader, the revolutionary zealots had changed the order of government against the wish of a vast majority of their fellow-countrymen. In doing their will and pleasure, they had slaughtered thousands of their fellow-countrymen. Success, and the desire of the majority of the nation for the success, could have alone justified the action of the Neapolitan conspirators. They could plead neither of these justifications. Their brief hour of triumph,—which cost the nation so many lives and so much treasure,—had been followed quickly by total defeat. Events had proved that, instead of having the majority of the people on their side, the conspirators were never, even for a moment, supported by a considerable minority of the nation.

Under these circumstances, Ferdinand and Maria Caroline certainly had grounds for thinking, in the summer of 1799, that the general interests of the nation, no less than the peculiar interests of the monarchy, demanded measures which should render the Jacobins powerless for mischief in the future. To insist, as some of the French republicans insist, that, on the collapse of the Parthenopeian republic, Ferdinand should have proclaimed a general amnesty, and left this dangerous party even stronger after

its failure than it was at the moment of its revolt, is to provoke ridicule. Would the French republic have acted so meekly and weakly under corresponding circumstances? Great revolts are not suppressed by syringes charged with rose-water; and their suppression is invariably followed by the chastisement of the principal rebels. The suppression of our Indian mutiny was followed by a rigorous chastisement of the mutineers. When the present French republic got the upper hand of the Parisian commune, no tender sentiment prevented her from dealing out stern punishment to the communists. It cannot be imagined that, had he been in Ferdinand's place, Buonaparte would have punished the Neapolitan Jacobins less sternly.

In considering the number of the Neapolitan rebels who were sent to the scaffold, the reader must also have regard to the temper and condition of the people whom the executions were designed to impress. The chastisement that, at the close of the nineteenth century, would be excessive in England, where human life is regarded tenderly, would be nothing more than wholesome rigour in lands, where the ordinary law is less lenient and man's nature less humane. To apprehend how wildly ferocious human nature was in Southern Italy at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century, readers should meditate on the atrocities that attended the civil wars of the Neapolitans in that period. The French writers who speak so passionately of Ferdinand's rigour to the Jacobins of his capital, would do well to remember how the Neapolitans were

handled, a few years later, by Joseph Buonaparte and Murat.

There is no question that Joachim Murat did well to suppress brigandage in Calabria. But he certainly showed no nice regard for human life in his way of doing the good work. In something less than two months (November and December, 1810) over two thousand brigands were killed at Murat's order. The brigands, whose names had been entered on official lists, with a view to their extermination, numbered three thousand; and they all perished under the chastisement, with the exception of the few who escaped to Sicily, and the very few who found concealment in the forests, and, on being captured long after the extermination of the bands, were sent to perpetual imprisonment.

In the war upon the brigands, many honest persons were put to death for holding intercourse with robbers, and even for nothing worse than an infringement of the orders of the police. To facilitate the operations of his men, General Manhes (who directed the measures of extermination for King Murat) issued a proclamation to the peasants, forbidding them under pain of death to go to their ordinary labours in the fields with a supply of food about their persons; and picquets of gendarmes were appointed to see that this order was obeyed. Either from ignorance of the order, or from a notion that so trivial and innocent an infringement of the edict was permissible, eleven women and children went forth from the city of Stilo to gather olives on a distant farm, carrying a little bread in their pockets for their midday meal. Stopped and

searched by a detachment of gendarmes, under the command of Lieutenant Gambacorta, these eleven persons, all of them being women or young children, were found guilty of disobedience to the order, and were then and there put to death.—In a wood near Cosenza, an aged man was seen giving food to a fugitive and half-famished brigand. It mattered not to General Manhes that the old man was an honest creature, and had incurred the penalty of death in giving bread to his own son. Condemned to die, this old man was executed in the public square of Cosenza, after he had been compelled to witness his son's execution.

Colletta gives an even more shocking example of the way in which Murat's agents slew virtuous Calabrians for breaking a mere police-law in rendering the offices of Christian charity. A wretched woman was flying with her brigand-husband from the ruthless soldiery, when she gave birth to an infant in the forest of San Biase. Fearful that the cries of her babe would draw soldiers to her husband's place of concealment, she carried the infant by night to the city of Nicastro, and there confided it to one of her female friends. Having thus provided for her child, the mother returned to her husband. What was the fate of the woman who took charge of the infant? It was in vain for her, when charged with the offence, to plead that she had not held intercourse with a brigand,—that the child was too young even to pilfer, that its mother was no brigand, though wedded to one. It is on record that this woman of Nicastro was for this act of humanity found guilty of succouring a

fugitive brigand, that she was condemned to death for the offence, and that the sentence was carried into effect. Such things were done in Southern Italy under Murat, of whom Monsieur Gagnière speaks in terms of high admiration. The cases of these thirteen persons—one old man and twelve women or young children—are given by Colletta on good authority, as typical examples of what was done in Calabria during the chastisement of the brigands. It is no exaggeration to say that all the traitors, who died at Naples for their treason during Ferdinand's chastisement of the Jacobins, were fewer than the distinctly virtuous Calabrians who were executed at Murat's order during the chastisement of the three thousand brigands.

I am not arguing that Ferdinand deserves no blame for his treatment of the Parthenopeian rebels. The severity of the chastisement greatly exceeded the necessity. Moreover, the chastisement was attended by incidents of which no man of feeling can read without distress and indignation. The same may be said of our punishment of the Indian mutineers, and of the French punishment of the Parisian communists after the fall of the Commune. Let it be declared emphatically that Ferdinand's chastisement of the Neapolitan rebels was in some particular cases vindictive and horrible. But for none of these cases was Maria Caroline accountable. Before the commencement of the trials she had expressed the strongest opinion that the capitulation of the forts should be annulled, and that the rebels should receive rigorous justice, without regard to sex. But when

the trials had begun, her weak influence was exerted on the side of mercy.

No longer swaying Ferdinand's nature, the Queen could influence the course of events only by letters to Lady Hamilton; and, though they contain expressions of extreme severity, the extant epistles show that the chastisement would have been less stern had her power been greater. The letters touching Prince Belmonte's brother afford conclusive testimony that, instead of thinking a hundred persons should be executed, Maria Caroline thought the capital sentences should not exceed fifty. But for the moment Maria Caroline, to adopt her own account of herself, was 'inutile.' To win pardons for Pignatelli and Migliano she could not rely on her own power over Ferdinand, but was under the necessity of entreating Emma Hamilton to lure him to clemency. Though she was (to use Miss Knight's significant expression) 'the cause of many pardons being granted,' Maria Caroline obtained the pardons not by direct application to the King, but by moving Lady Hamilton to humour him into granting them. Even with Emma Hamilton to help her, she sometimes failed to compass her merciful designs.

Of all the hideous affairs of the chastisement, Luigia Sanfelice's execution was the most revolting. But no blame is due to Maria Caroline for the atrocity, for which even Monsieur Gagnière holds Ferdinand solely accountable. Not that the chief sufferer from a monstrous outrage on humanity was the angel she has been depicted by republican writers. A vehement Parthenopeian, Luigia resembled other ladies of her party in having confidential relations with royalist

politicians. Had she acted to the royalists as she acted towards their enemies, she would have been stigmatized as a spy by republican writers. Having a lover in the royalist Captain Baker, brother of the Neapolitan banker who designed the so-called Baker's conspiracy, Luigia had another lover in the person of Lieutenant Ferri, an ardent republican and a young officer of the Parthenopeian 'garde nationale.' By means of her friendship with Captain Baker, she acquired a knowledge of the secret preparations, that were being made by the royalists of the capital for a rising against the republic and a massacre of its leaders. To the Parthenopeians, who had for years conspired against the monarchy before treacherously opening the gates of Naples to Championnet's legions, it of course appeared monstrous that, on the departure of the French army, the royalists of the capital should conspire against the republic and do their best for the restoration of the monarchy.

Between these two parties Luigia Sanfelice, a woman of noble birth, played a not unusual part. Having learnt the designs of the royalists from Captain Baker, and even obtained from him a card, that would preserve her person from peril during the imminent insurrection, she carried her information and the 'billet de sauve-garde' to Lieutenant Ferri, telling him the name of her informant and begging him to keep the card for his own protection. Lieutenant Ferri lost no time in denouncing the conspiracy and chief conspirators to the government. Having learnt all the lieutenant could tell them, the republican chiefs sent for Luigia, who confirmed all

his statements, with the exception of one particular, respecting which she held her silence. She refused to name the individual from whom she had obtained the intelligence and the card. As she had already given her other lover's name to Lieutenant Ferri, and he had given it to the government, Luigia's conspirators forebore to press her on the point of honour, so that she might be in a position to aver, that *she* did not denounce the man whose confidence she betrayed. But on all other points she was abundantly communicative; and in reward for her communicativeness she was proclaimed the Saviour of the Republic. Through her action, the Bakers were seized, and their conspiracy crushed by acts that are warmly commended by revolutionary historians, who would have exclaimed against their barbarity, had they been committed by royalists. Honoured by the Parthenopeians, whilst they still looked hopefully to the sea for the arrival of a French fleet, Luigia was of course called to account for her patriotism by the royalists, when the republic had fallen.

Though the *procès* against her may have been settled before the King left Naples Bay, she was not tried till he had returned to Sicily. The judges could only declare her guilty. Besides favouring the republic during its brief season of success, she had aided it in its failing hour, by defeating a royalist movement and causing the death of several royalists, one of whom was her own luckless lover, Captain Baker. After being sentenced to death, Luigia Sanfelice pleaded her pregnancy in stay of execution. Coming from a lady, so well provided with lovers,

the plea was not one to occasion astonishment. But, on hearing at Palermo that her execution had been deferred till her child should be born, Ferdinand expressed a suspicion that the plea was groundless, and ordered her to be sent from Naples to the capital of Sicily, in order that she should be examined by the Queen's physicians.

The King's suspicion proved erroneous; and, the court-doctors having certified her pregnancy, it was ordered that the culprit should remain in prison till she became a mother, and then go to her fate. Ferdinand has been execrated as a monster for this order, though in such a case it was a mere matter of course. In these more humane times there is something unutterably repulsive in the notion of prolonging a miserable woman's life till after child-birth, and then handing her over to the executioner. But a hundred years since, England was well content with the penal law, that dealt, and may still deal, thus harshly with women in Luigia's condition.

Luigia's case having been thus brought under their notice—indeed, one might almost say under their personal consideration—the ladies of the Sicilian court conceived a natural tenderness for the wretched woman, who was doomed to die as soon as she should have become a mother. Maria Caroline wished that this culprit of her own sex should be pardoned. Emma Hamilton was tearful about Luigia. The crown-princess (Maria Clementina) felt compassion for Captain Baker's betrayer. The story was one to stir and hold feminine sympathy; and, as it invited romantic treatment, the ladies of the court dealt

romantically with Luigia's case. She was young, noble, beautiful, and deeply in love with Lieutenant Ferri. She had given no undue encouragement to Captain Baker, who had forced his attentions on her, together with the political secrets which he was bound in honour to keep from the knowledge of a republican. On learning the danger which threatened the Jacobins, she had in the first instance thought less of her party than of her lover, and less of herself than of both. Instead of keeping 'the card' for her own safety, she had given it to the man, whom she loved passionately. She had acted nobly in refusing to say, from whom she had received the card. Lieutenant Ferri should have respected her confidence. After he had betrayed her confidence to the Jacobin leaders, she could not help confirming his statements. The poor girl was the victim of two blundering men,—*that* Captain Baker who had forced upon her the secrets which he should have kept to himself, and *that* pitiful Lieutenant Ferri who had rewarded her generous devotion to him, by betraying her to the rebel government. This was the feminine view of Luigia's case. With all his weakness, Ferdinand was not a woman, and judged Luigia Sanfelice differently.

The worst remains to be told. Instead of being delivered to the executioner, soon after she had given birth to her child, Luigia Sanfelice was detained in prison till the autumn of the following year. On the proclamation of the King's amnesty to the rebels on the 30th May, 1800, the poor woman's friends assumed that her life would be spared, and that after some

prolongation of her imprisonment she would regain her liberty. But they were mistaken.

In the autumn of 1800, Ferdinand was reminded in a remarkable way of the compassion, with which Luigia was regarded by the ladies of the court. The crown-princess had recently given birth to a male infant; and Ferdinand was paying a visit of ceremonious congratulation to his daughter-in-law, when he saw a letter, addressed to him in her hand-writing, on the babe's cradle. It had for generations been a usage of the Neapolitan court, for the King to grant any three favours, she should be pleased to ask of his goodness, to the princess who, like Maria Clementina, had recently given the nation an heir to the throne. The letter was a fervent and pathetic entreaty for a free pardon to the unhappy Luigia; and, in order to make herself more secure of getting this one grace, the princess asked for no other favour. Her three petitions were all made for the one desire of her womanly heart.

Ferdinand had actually taken the infant into his arms, and to the mother's gratification was extolling its beauty and robustness, when he saw the letter and asked its purport. 'It is a favour which I ask,' returned the princess with emotion, 'only one favour instead of three, so much do I desire to move the kind heart of your Majesty.' Smiling graciously, Ferdinand asked, 'For whom do you plead?' Raising herself in her bed, Maria Clementina replied, 'For the unhappy Luigia Sanfelice.' She had intended to say more, but the sudden look of fury in her father-in-law's face rendered her powerless to add

another word. Dropping his grandchild on the mother's bed, Ferdinand turned abruptly on his heel, and went from the room without speaking another word.

But Clementina's prayer received an impressive answer. Order was given by the Bourbon, that Luigia Sanfelice should be forthwith sent from her prison in Palermo to Naples, and should without further delay suffer the death which had been so long hanging over her; and this atrocious order was carried out to the ghastly end in the Naples marketplace on 11th September, 1800. This was Ferdinand's reply to Maria Clementina's prayer. It was a furious fool's answer to feminine dictation. The weak man, who had mutinied against feminine dominion, deemed the crime an impressive manifesto, —a lesson to the Austrian princess, that she should not presume to interfere in affairs of policy; a lesson to Maria Caroline, that her wish was no longer law to him; a lesson to the whole court that he would be his own master.

Had Luigia Sanfelice been sent to her fate immediately after the child's birth, she would have perished lamentably, but in accordance with law and usage. But in sending her to the scaffold, so long after the proclamation of amnesty, on a sentence delivered so long before the proclamation, Ferdinand perpetrated an execrable crime. Her death was not an execution, —it was a murder, done by a king at the instigation of the paltriest motive!

Though she suffered in reputation from this worst act of her weak husband, Maria Caroline was cer-

tainly in no degree accountable for the crime, which was indeed an act of defiance to her, as well as a declaratiou of contempt for all meddlesome women. At the time of Luigia's execution, Maria Caroline was at Vienna, and had not spoken to her husband or even seen him for more than three months. Had Nelson been at Naples, or had Emma Hamilton been Ferdinand's daily companion in August and September, 1800, or had Maria Caroline's power been as great over her husband after Mack's fiasco as it was before the rout, the long list of crimes done by kings would have missed one of its most revolting examples of despotic cruelty.

Let all the circumstances of Luigia Sanfelice's story be well considered by readers, who cling to the old and erroneous notion, that Maria Caroline instigated the severity of 'the chastisement,' or at least might have done more to restrain its excesses. Let such readers remember how the King displayed his manly vigour and rigour when he had escaped from her domination. Colletta says truly that 'the King, upon his restoration, exceeded all his former tyranny.' There would have been no occasion for those words, had Ferdinand been still content to reign, and left his wife to rule. Had he remained to the last hour of his existence as much under her control, as he was from his wedding till the autumn of 1798, Ferdinand would have earned no title of historic respect, but he would have missed historic infamy. Deteriorating steadily from 1798 to 1814, he became more and more detestable after his first wife's death. Ferdinand I. of the Two Sicilies was a worse man than Ferdinand IV. of Naples and Sicily had ever been.

CHAPTER XXI.

FROM PALERMO TO VIENNA AND LONDON.

Ferdinand's Return to Sicily—Rejoicings at Palermo—Maria Caroline's alternate Elation and Melancholy—Capitulation of Cività Vecchia—Bourcard enters Rome—San Angelo and the Vatican in Ferdinand's Keeping—Maria Caroline's Exultation and Regrets—Revival of her Self-confidence—Her Gift to the Starving Maltese—Her Trip to Caserta and Naples—Buonaparte's Re-appearance in France—His Success in Paris—The First Consul and the Republic—Recall of Sir William Hamilton—The odious Paget—Maria Caroline's Distress and Emma Hamilton's Tears—Their Suspicions of Ferdinand and General Acton—The *Fracas* at the Palace—Lady Hamilton loses her Temper and 'speaks her Mind'—Estrangement of Ferdinand and Maria Caroline—She decides to go to Vienna—Reasons for the Decision—Lady Hamilton's Trip to Malta—Maria Caroline at Leghorn—Battle of Marengo—The Two Despatches—Maria Caroline's Journey to Vienna—Emma Hamilton at the Imperial Court—Lady Hamilton at Prague, Dresden and Hamburg—Her Re-appearance in London—Christmas Revels at Fonthill.

1799—1800 A.D.

LEAVING Naples Bay on the evening of the 5th of August, 1799, the *Foudroyant* entered the harbour of Palermo on the 8th of the same month. Had Ferdinand returned to Sicily from a glorious victory, the Sicilians could not have greeted him with louder acclamations or more passionate avowals of loyalty. As they came on shore, Nelson and the Hamiltons

were also welcomed with extravagant delight. Maria Caroline had come to the water's marge to receive her husband and friends; and cries of approval rose from the vast multitude of spectators, when Her Majesty embraced the British minister's wife, and put upon her neck the rich gold chain, to which was attached the jewelled picture, whose largest diamonds declared the donor's 'Eterna Gratitudina.' A day or so later, Maria Caroline sent to her friend's house two coach-loads of magnificent dresses, valued at more than three thousand pounds, to replace the wardrobe which she had left behind her at Naples in the previous December. At the same time, Sir William Hamilton received from the Queen a jewelled portrait of Ferdinand. The value of the gifts thus showered on the Hamiltons in the course of a few days is said to have exceeded six thousand pounds. The gifts made to Nelson have long been matters of history. Accepting with delight the dignity and title of Duke of Bronté, he accepted reluctantly the Sicilian estate, that in fortunate times yielded him three thousand pounds a-year.

Elated by the recovery of Naples, Maria Caroline's spirits continued to rise with the continuance of the reverses of France, which revived her hope of seeing in a short time the extinction of the French republic and the restoration of the French monarchy. Events certainly seemed to justify the hope. The Neapolitan Jacobins were in the dust. Their infamous republic had vanished. The French had been swept from the realm of Naples. Republican institutions and French influence had passed no less completely from the

papal dominions, where Cività Vecchia was surrendered on September 28th, 1799, to a force of English marines and seamen by the French governor who, whilst making terms for the relinquishment of the sea-port, also made terms for the capitulation of the French garrison of the holy city,—an incident that enabled Nelson to boast that his ships had taken Rome. Two days later the Neapolitan troops under Bourcard entered Rome just in time to snatch the honour of the occupation from the outstretched hand of Austria. 'We have news,' Maria Caroline wrote to Emma Hamilton on October the 12th, 1799, 'that Bourcard took possession of Rome half-an-hour before the Austrians. Frolick was very much piqued by it, but withdrew his troops.' It was a fortunate half-hour for Maria Caroline's pride, that gave her the satisfaction of seeing Rome and the Roman states in the hands of a Neapolitan army,—of knowing that the standard of Naples waved over San Angelo, and that the royal seal of Naples was set on the gates of the Vatican. After all her misadventures, she had achieved the object for which she had sent Mack's army into the papal states in the previous autumn.

But the bitter memory of those misadventures qualified her exultation at being able to boast that she had driven the French from Rome. Her face, lovely still but no longer ravishingly beautiful, flushed with shame and vexation when she reflected on how much she had lost by her precipitancy in the autumn of '98. Had she only held her hand and curbed her impetuosity some eleven months since, how much anguish and humiliation would she have escaped.

Had she acted on her son-in-law's advice, and waited till the spring, her army would not have suffered the defeat, which had been so disastrous to her credit for sagacity in the courts of Europe. Had she not provoked Championnet to march on Naples, there would have been no French occupation of her capital, no Parthenopeian republic, no need for chastising the Parthenopeians with a rigour, which was already doing her reputation much undeserved injury, though Ferdinand was alone accountable for the excesses of severity.

Another thing to modify her exultation at the recent turn of events was the worst consequence of 'Mack's fiasco,'—the extinction of her husband's confidence in her judgment on affairs of policy. If she hoped that he would return from Naples with a distaste for ruling as well as reigning, and that by welcoming him back to Palermo with the honour due to a conqueror she would revive his old admiration of her charms and recover all his former trust in her mental capacity, she had cause for bitter tears. At the same time she saw that General Acton had no intention to aid in restoring her to supremacy at the council-table. Ceasing to be Maria Caroline's confederate in statecraft from the moment of Ferdinand's mutiny against her domination, Acton became in every sense of the term His Majesty's minister,—studying the humours, supporting the views, and obeying the orders of the King, who had resolved to be his own master.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that, notwithstanding the improvement in Neapolitan affairs, the Queen languished in health and sometimes

yielded to despondency. 'Yesterday,' she wrote to Lady Hamilton on October 12th, 1799, when she had just received the animating news of Bourcard's entry into Rome, 'I was very feverish, and am really ill. I fear that I shall never recover. Were it not for my daughters, I should wish to bid adieu to the world, and retire into a convent, there to terminate my days, a desire prompted by the circumstances in which I am placed.' Rallying from the melancholy indicated by these words, on the subsidence of the fever that so often assailed her, she wrote a few days later (October 15th, '99) of her resolve to accompany her husband to Naples, should he hold to his purpose of returning to their continental capital in the middle of November. 'Were I king,' she remarked in a vein of self-confidence and intrepidity that contrast rather comically with the panic which seized her before the flight to Palermo, 'I should have been there long since, or indeed should never have left, but should have risked all and certainly have conquered.' In this brighter mood, she could imagine that her appearance at Naples would please 'all her friends' there, and even satisfy their strongest desire. It was thus that in the course of a few days the Queen of broken health and shaken nerves would sigh for the tranquillity of a convent and desire the excitements of a statelier court. From the same letter it appears that she found comfort in imagining that Ferdinand had gone to Naples Bay in the previous July at her instance. 'I regret even,' she says, 'having urged his first visit, for being thirty-six days on board ship, doing nothing of any utility or glory,

has seriously compromised him, but I am now ready to go with him whenever he wishes it, though he should go in a polacca.'

That Maria Caroline showed herself in the autumn of '99 less insensible than her husband and General Acton to the sufferings of the starving Maltese appears from the letter in which Nelson wrote on October 31st to the Emperor Paul, 'The laborious task of keeping the Maltese quiet in Malta, through difficulties which your Majesty will perfectly understand, has been principally brought about by the goodness of Her Majesty the Queen of Naples, who at one moment of distress sent £7,000, belonging absolutely to herself and children, by the exertion of Lady Hamilton . . . and by the bravery and conciliating manners of Captain Ball.'

Holding to her purpose of accompanying the King on his next visit to the Continent, Maria Caroline saw Naples before the close of the year. Writing to her peculiar confidante during or shortly before this brief trip, Maria Caroline says, in an undated letter, 'I am going to return in a few days. I expect to stay a night at Caserta, and to go the day after to the city for three days, where I hope to see you, to assure you that I am for life your very attached and grateful friend,—CHARLOTTE.' Probably Her Majesty's reception at Naples was less cordial than she hoped it might prove; for, though the chastisement was Ferdinand's work, all the opprobrium arising from its severity fell upon the Queen, who had used her little influence to mitigate the rigour of the punishment. One would like to know who were 'the friends' at

Naples of whom Maria Caroline wrote to Lady Hamilton on the 15th of October, 1799. They cannot have been either numerous or influential. Disliked by the nobles, whom she had offended in former time by her 'laudable schemes for the welfare of the people,' disesteemed by the clergy, whose disposition to think well of her had been destroyed by her unrelenting defamers, despised by the higher people of affairs as a meddlesome woman who had impoverished the country, and detested by the political malcontents, who attributed it to her that their near kindred had died on the scaffold or were suffering in the penal islands, Maria Caroline had by this time fallen out of favour with the bourgeoisie and the lazzaroni, whose acclamations had for so many years enabled her to endure with equanimity the hatred of 'the classes.' It is not surprising that she returned to Palermo without any strong desire for the immediate re-establishment of the court at Naples.

Time was bringing her new troubles. In October, 1799, Buonaparte reappeared in Paris, having withdrawn on 'French leave' from his Egyptian command. Three months later, he had overborne opposition with violence, given France a new constitution, and was organizing an enormous army at Dijon. After getting the upper hand of the republic, he had drawn the whole power of France in his hand, and before the end of January, 1800, was reigning in the Tuileries, an emperor in everything but the imperial purple and title; for the insignificance and powerlessness of Cambacères and Lebrun only rendered the First Consul's supremacy more impressive. Though

these incidents occasioned her disquiet, Maria Caroline could regard each of them from a consolatory point of view. She had never allowed herself to hope that the Corsican would perish in Egypt, and could congratulate herself on the lateness of his return to Europe. If his success troubled her, the Queen found comfort in reflecting that the French republic had received the *coup-de-grâce*—or at least a wound of which she would soon perish—from her greatest general. Because he was creating a new army at Dijon, it did not follow that he meant to throw its legions into Italy. It was more probable that he would use it for combating the internal enemies, who would soon be banded together against the destroyer of the republic. Surrounded by hostile factions he would soon have enough to do in quelling the insurrections of his turbulent subjects. As the military dictator of a distracted people he would become less ambitious of martial glory, than desirous of the advantages of peace. It was even conceivable to Maria Caroline that, in the course of a few years, the Corsican adventurer would become an instrument for restoring the French crown to its legitimate claimant. But though she could thus accommodate herself to incidents that were making sovereigns tremble for their thrones, the Queen of Naples saw nothing but misadventure and humiliation to herself in the recall of the aged diplomatist, who for thirty-five years had been His Britannic Majesty's representative at the Court of Naples.

When the London cabinet determined to supersede Sir William Hamilton, the Neapolitan refugees, who had fled to Paris and London during the last hours of

the Parthenopeian republic, and the numerous Neapolitans who were banished from the Two Sicilies for sympathizing with the Jacobin party, had for some months been employed in publishing erroneous accounts of the recent troubles of their country. Much of these accounts had reference to Nelson's action in the Bay of Naples, and the judicial chastisement of the Parthenopeian rebels. It was alleged by the angry exiles that Nelson had already left Palermo and was moving with his squadron towards Naples, when Maria Caroline received intelligence of the capitulation of the castles Uovo and Nuovo, and that in her first displeasure at the intelligence Her Majesty had despatched Emma Hamilton in a fast-sailing corvette with urgent instructions to the Admiral to nullify the treaty, which threatened to put a large number of the worst rebels beyond the reach of her vengeance. According to this wild fable, Emma Hamilton started in pursuit of the English squadron, overtook it, and to Nelson's equal surprise and delight came on board the *Foudroyant* just as he was taking view of the flags of truce, that fluttered over the castles. Yielding to the entreaties of his enchantress, Nelson annulled the capitulation and was rewarded by Emma Hamilton with every favour he desired of her.

Accepted for true history in Paris, this monstrous invention of morbid fancy was also believed in London, not only by the zealots of the republican coteries, but by liberal politicians of credit and influence. At the same time it was alleged that in their subsequent measures for the chastisement of the

fallen rebels, Maria Caroline and Lady Hamilton had received Nelson's countenance and co-operation. Of course, Mr. Pitt and his comrades in power were alive to the absolute falseness of these absurd stories. But, as the stories were believed, ministers could not afford to treat them with contemptuous disregard. To avoid the complaints, which threatened them with a storm of popular denunciation, ministers decided to recall Sir William Hamilton and replace him with a diplomatist, who would be less subservient to the Queen of Naples. There are also grounds for the opinion that this decision resulted in some degree from Lord Grenville's knowledge, that Sir William Hamilton's recall would be no less agreeable to Ferdinand and General Acton than painful to Her Majesty.

The first intimation she received of the arrangement for Sir William Hamilton's recall appears to have come to Maria Caroline on Tuesday, February the 26th, 1800, in the evening of which day she asked Emma Hamilton, whether her husband had received letters from London. Shortly before putting this question to Emma, who answered it in the negative, the Queen had learnt from Circello, the Neapolitan ambassador in London, that a certain Mr. Paget (the Honourable Arthur Paget) was about to leave London for Vienna, whence he would proceed to Naples, in order that their Sicilian Majesties might not be without an English ambassador during the absence of Sir William Hamilton, whose health and affairs required him to visit England. Circello's cautious words had the intended effect on Maria Caroline, who was seized

with a suspicion that they told her much less than the whole truth. Three days later (March 1st, 1800), when Sir William Hamilton had received official intelligence of Mr. Paget's mission, the Queen wrote with lively emotion to Lady Hamilton of the deplorable news. 'Tell the Chevalier [Hamilton],' she observed in the closing sentences of the long and lachrymose epistle, 'I have never felt until now how much I am attached to him, how much I owe him. At this moment my eyes are full of tears. I must finish; but in begging you to tell me what I should do, I beg you to remember that alike in happiness and misery I shall ever be your sincere, familiar, loving, grateful, devoted, though afflicted friend,—CHARLOTTE.—Tell me what I should do, and I am ready to do it thoroughly.'

For a moment, whilst reflecting on the official arrangement, which threatened to deprive her of her dearest female friend, of the English minister who had for so many years been her loyal partisan, and of the English admiral who had served her so gallantly and effectually, it appeared to Maria Caroline that she might still retain the Hamiltons at her side, and keep Nelson amongst her frequent visitors by inducing Ferdinand to write to London, begging that he might not be deprived of a companion so congenial to his temper and so serviceable to his political interests as Sir William Hamilton. 'I am ever thinking,' she wrote to Emma Hamilton, 'that if the Chevalier [Hamilton] would relinquish his purpose of going to England, so as not to leave us at this season of difficulty, and the King wrote instead, this

storm might even yet pass over.' But *if* she pressed Ferdinand (as she seems to have done) to aid her in compassing the official withdrawal of Sir William Hamilton's recall, Maria Caroline found him far from ready to serve her purpose. The incident, which had caused his consort so many tears, may well have appeared a matter for congratulation to the King and his prime minister, who had for some time past been more often thwarted than aided in their policies by the Hamiltons. On seeing how little Ferdinand and General Acton were troubled by what pained her so acutely, the always suspicious queen soon began to think it possible that they had privily compassed the event, which she was deploring so pathetically. The evidence on this point is incomplete; but one of the Queen's extant letters puts it beyond question that, at the time of her greatest agitation about Sir William Hamilton's recall, she had a stormy interview with her husband on some affair, that had caused Lady Hamilton to address him with more fervour than deference.

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[March, 1800.]

'My dear Miledy,

'I received yester-evening your obliging letter and the papers. I will take care that justice is done to this interesting duchess Sorentino, and to mitigate her cruel fate. Alas! to remove or lessen the pains and griefs of others is the only service and enjoyment of which I am capable.—Yesterday on your departure I endured a scene of madness—cries, yellings, threats to kill you, throw you from the window, to send for your husband in order to complain of your contemptuous treatment (pour le plaindre de ce que vous avez tourne les epaules). The scene was violent, and

your husband will certainly receive complaints about it: I give you notice, so that you take order for the consequences. I am extremely unhappy. I have so many troubles, and have only two courses open to me, either to go away or die of chagrin,—and that is a most painful death. If you go away, my dear friend, in the spring, be assured that, even though friendship cause you to return in November, your friend will no longer be living. Tell me what news you have of our dear and virtuous hero. Noble has communicated to Capero (?) a slightly consoling letter of the 14th of February from Mahon. The wretch Paget (le maudit Paget) is at Vienna. To end, everything afflicts, troubles, desolates me; but even to the grave I remain your ever sincere and grateful friend.'

At a time when the Queen and Lady Hamilton thought of nothing but Sir William Hamilton's recall, and the movements of the odious Paget, what can have occasioned such an astounding *fracas* in Her Majesty's apartment? Why such violence on Ferdinand's part, and such threats of complaining to Sir William Hamilton of his wife's insolence? What had Ferdinand done to provoke an ebullition of wrath from Lady Hamilton? Surely, at such a moment, the violence of the woman must have been in some way connected with her own grand cause of discontent! One can only account for the conduct of the furious adventuress by hypothesis. If she shared Maria Caroline's suspicion that Ferdinand had himself compassed Sir William Hamilton's recall, the vehemently emotional beauty was just the woman to burst in upon the King and Queen, and upbraid him in Her Majesty's presence for his underhand dealing.

Moving no less slowly than secretly, the odious

Paget was still on his way to relieve Sir William Hamilton of his official cares and dignity, when Lady Hamilton received the following letter from *her* queen:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

'My dear Miledy,

'I long for intelligence of your dear health, spirit, welfare, so vividly interesting to me. I am saddened by everything I see and hear. My daughter Louise has lost in a few hours her six-years-old son, and she is much troubled, which is only natural. As for me, I envy the fortunate child for no longer being of this base world. As for affairs, I know nothing. Intrigues, cabals, and ill humour seem determined to make war upon me. My daughter writes her earnest desire that I should visit her. Adieu, my dear Miledy! What is that Paget doing? He keeps incognito a long time. I wish he had never come. Adieu, my very dear dear Emma, my good friend. Preserve your so dear affection for me, and rely on mine, which shall end only with my life. My compliments to our hero Nelson and to the Chevalier.'

The estrangement of Ferdinand and Maria Caroline having now gone so far, that he was capable of railing and storming at her in her peculiar quarter of the palace, she had reason to say that only two courses were open to her,—to go away or die of chagrin. Had she remained at Palermo without her Emma to gossip with on the news of the hour, without the friends who supported so cordially her party in the palace, and with a new English ambassador, whose mere presence would have been offensive to her, she would certainly have endured incessant vexation. Under the circumstances, she was wise in resolving to withdraw for awhile from the husband

who neither valued her advice nor delighted in her society. At Vienna she could for a time be even more serviceable to the dynastic interests of her husband and children, and more influential in European affairs, than at Naples or Palermo. At Vienna she would have the endearments of the daughter who was longing for her society. A year or so hence, when Ferdinand should have grown weary of being his own master, and survived the influences which caused him to undervalue her, she could resume her management of the Two Sicilies. The Austrian court would prove a better school for her younger children than Naples in its present disorder and depression. Moreover, she wished to educate her nephew and son-in-law, the Emperor Francis, into taking a just and reasonable view of her claims to territorial reward for her services against the principles and arms of the French republic. Till her domestic and political interests should have righted themselves in the Two Sicilies, she would do well to sojourn for awhile in the land of her birth. Taking this view of her position, Maria Caroline decided to leave Sicily at the moment of the Hamiltons' departure for England, and made Nelson promise to convey her and four of her children on the *Foudroyant* to Leghorn, where she designed to bid her English friends farewell.

Sir William Hamilton having delivered his letters to their Sicilian Majesties on 22nd April, 1800, Nelson started two days later on the trip to Malta, which was attended by the incident, which unfortunately resulted in his child's birth. Entertaining

on his flag-ship Sir William and Lady Hamilton, Miss Cornelia Knight, another English lady and gentleman, and an old Maltese nobleman, the hero of the Nile took his friends to Syracuse, and passed pleasant days with them at Malta, before returning to Palermo in time to keep his engagement with the Queen. Notwithstanding the melancholy that possessed Emma Hamilton on the anniversary of her birthday, the trip was brightly successful; but by converting into a permanent entanglement what might have been nothing more than a transient and undiscovered dalliance, the consequences of this voyage of pleasure were deplorable. Had it not been for this trip, Nelson would have returned with unabated affection and an untroubled conscience to his wife's embrace, and most likely have passed from Lady Hamilton's hurtful influence.

Attended by Castelcicala, four of her children (Leopold, Christina, Amelia and Antoinette) and the Hamiltons, who sailed with her on the *Foudroyant*, and by a numerous retinue of officers and servants, who made the voyage in other vessels under Nelson's convoy, Maria Caroline was on the sea whilst Marengo was being fought, and came to Leghorn shortly before the arrival of the messenger, bearing a copy of the words in which Melas announced his victory over the French to his imperial master. It was in the evening of the 16th of June that Maria Caroline, her face glowing with excitement, read the glad tidings,—'After a long and sanguinary battle on the plains of Marengo, the arms of His Majesty the Emperor have completely beaten the French army

conducted into Italy and commanded by General Buonaparte; the details of the battle will be given in another despatch, as well as the fruits of the victory which the Lieutenants-General Ott and Zach are gathering on the field. Dated, Alessandria, 14th June, 1800—Evening.' The emotions with which Maria Caroline read these words were a renewal of the violent joy she experienced from the earliest news of Nelson's victory in Aboukir Bay.

But a few hours later, on being awakened to read the promised details of the victory, she rose from her bed to endure a cruel disappointment. 'Towards the decline of day,' Melas wrote in this second dispatch, 'the enemy were reinforced by a fresh army, and fighting on the field of Marengo the greater part of the night, have beaten our army, the conquerors of the preceding day. Encamped beneath the walls of this fortress, we are now collecting the miserable remnant of the lost battle, and are consulting on the best course to pursue under present circumstances, and the success of the enemy. Dated, Alessandria, midnight, 14th—15th June.' Desaix had appeared on the scene of desperate conflict, just in time to enable the man of fate to snatch victory from defeat, and confirm his autocratic sway over France. Yielding to agony that exceeded her powers of endurance, as she realized the significance of the disastrous intelligence, Maria Caroline let the paper drop from her hands, and fell fainting into the arms of the lady, who had roused her from tranquil repose, only to plunge her in despair.

That Maria Caroline expected Nelson and the

Hamiltons to leave her soon after her arrival at Leghorn appears from the gifts, designed for farewell *souvenirs*, which she gave them at the sea-port, and the letters of farewell which she and her children wrote to Emma Hamilton, whilst the *Foudroyant* was nearing the harbour. But the great battle, which confounded so many arrangements of greater importance, disturbed the Queen's plans for her journey to Vienna. Till she should learn more of the movements of the victorious enemy, she hesitated to cross the peninsula. Remaining more than a month in this state of incertitude at Leghorn, she lingered there under Nelson's care until she had more cause to apprehend misadventure to herself and children from tumults in the town, than from an advance of the French army. It was at this moment that Nelson relinquished his purpose of returning to England by sea, and struck his flag in order to be at liberty to attend Her Majesty to Vienna.

In her alarm at the commotion of the Livornese, which afforded Emma Hamilton an opportunity for haranguing an Italian mob, in the language which she spoke as fluently as English, Maria Caroline retired with her children to an English man-of-war, the *Alexander*, for the night. Relanding on the morrow (17th July, 1800), she travelled rapidly—with Nelson and the Hamiltons, Mrs. Cadogan and Miss Cornelia Knight following in her train—from Leghorn to Florence, and from Florence to Ancona, where she found Russian ships, ready to convey her party to Trieste. To Nelson the journey across Italy, and from Trieste to Vienna, was a triumphal progress.

The martial hero, who knew neither fear nor defeat, could not have chosen a better time for showing himself to the multitudes, who forgot their dread of the Corsican adventurer in their enthusiasm for the English Admiral. Wildly applauded by the populace of every town and hamlet through which they passed, the Admiral and his peculiar friends were invited to *fêtes* wherever they rested. At Vienna, where Maria Caroline's dearest Emma was presented to Their Imperial Majesties by Lady Minto, the British ambassador's wife, the English travellers were received by the court with flattering cordiality and by the people with passionate delight. During their entertainment for four days at Eisenstadt, where they were the guests of the Prince and Princess Esterhazy, they feasted daily at a table, where a hundred grenadiers, the shortest of whom was six feet high, acted as servitors.

Only one mournful consideration qualified Emma Hamilton's felicity at Vienna. At last the hour was at hand when she must bid her 'dear Queen' farewell. It was at Vienna the two friends embraced one another for the last time. We may reject with a smile the droll tale of Emma's magnanimity in declining the annuity, which Maria Caroline pressed upon her friend as a parting gift; for though Lady Hamilton knew how to beg for rich gifts by the common artifice (as Mrs. Trench remarks) of showing that she longed for them, it was not in her nature to decline them, when they were offered to her. Readers may, however, be sure that the last words, spoken by the Queen of Naples to the village black-

smith's daughter, were eloquent of gratitude. Reflecting on the attentions, so lately lavished upon her at Vienna, Emma Hamilton, as she journeyed to Dresden, may well have hoped that the Queen of England would no longer decline to open her drawing-room to the adventuress, who had been so honoured at an Imperial Court.

Leaving Vienna on the 27th of September, 1800, Emma Hamilton continued to live daily under the world's eye,—at Prague, where she drank wine even more delicious than the champagne she 'loved passionately,'—at Dresden, where she was so keenly scrutinized by the critical Mrs. Trench,—and at Hamburg, whose merchants and bankers went mad about her beauty. Eating and drinking freely of all the good things, provided for her by her successive entertainers, Lady Hamilton had what the Americans call a 'good time' at each of these pleasant places. At Great Yarmouth, where she landed on the 6th of November, 1800, and all along the road from Great Yarmouth to Ipswich, and from Ipswich to London, she lived and travelled under the world's eye. At London, where she arrived in the same carriage with her husband and *her* Nelson, she lived under the daily observation of curious spectators. No woman in all the great capital was more closely scanned at routs and dinner-parties, in the crowded streets and theatres, than the famous beauty, who had at length returned to London, after so long an absence and after playing so strange a part in the world's drama. When she went out of town for the Christmas revels at Fonthill, crowds gathered on the high road, from the

London flagstones to the very entrance of Mr. Beckford's country house, and waited patiently in chill air for hours together, in order to get a view of her and the Admiral.

There was something of which she and Nelson thought more often than of any other subject, whilst she lived thus constantly under the world's observation. What was it? Whether her husband would get a peerage, that, in case of his death without male issue, would pass by the patent to his cousin Vathek Beckford? No. That wild ambition often held the woman's fancy; but, though he did his utmost to compass her desire for the social distinction, and even hoped that Sir William Hamilton would win the desired dignity, Nelson did not give much thought to Mr. Beckford's droll design. The subject, that so often rose to Emma Hamilton's mind and Nelson's mind in the closing months of 1800 and the opening weeks of the New Year, was unknown to the millionaire of Fonthill and unsuspected by the superannuated diplomatist. It was a common interest, that had for weeks and weeks been drawing the Admiral and the adventuress into closer intimacy. It was an interest that may have occasioned him some secret anxiety, whilst she entertained Mr. Beckford's friends with a series of her famous 'attitudes,' and won the plaudits of the crowded salon with her powerful impersonation of Agrippina.

CHAPTER XXII.

JUDGMENT AND EXECUTION.

Maria Caroline at Vienna—Her Influence on Francis II.—'That fatal Armistice'—The *Guerre d'Hiver*—Fall of Malta—Treaty of Luneville—Damas in Tuscany—His quick Defeat and Retreat—The First Consul's Wrath—Ferdinand's Crown in Danger—Maria Caroline's Prayer to Paul—Paul's Appeal to the First Consul—Its Result—Treaty of Florence—Treaty of Amiens—The Court returns to Naples—The Queen comes Home—A cold Welcome—Royal Marriages—More Work for the State Junta—Nelson again in the Mediterranean—Position of Sicilian Affairs—Nelson's Change of Feeling towards the Queen—Cause of the Change—His Care for the Sicilies—The First Consul becomes Emperor—Russians in Corfu—Napoleon's Letter of Menace to his Sister and Cousin of Naples—His Message to her from Milan—Closing Months of 1805—St. Cyr's Army—Massena's Veterans—Maria Caroline's Flight to Sicily—Joseph Buonaparte in Naples—Napoleon's Proclamation.

1800—1806 A.D.

WHILST Nelson and the Hamiltons were being fêted at Vienna, Maria Caroline was intent on schemes for Buonaparte's discomfiture, and glowed with the excitement of political intrigue.

Although Colletta, in his ignorance of the length of her stay at Leghorn, puts Maria Caroline's arrival at Vienna a month earlier than her actual coming to the capital, the historian appears to be right in representing that she came there soon enough to be largely

accountable for the Emperor's withdrawal from his first acceptance of Buonaparte's offer of peace. If the vacillating Francis had repented his instructions to St. Julien before the Queen's arrival, she was all the same largely influential in confirming her son-in-law in his timorous resolve to renew the conflict. Siding with Thugut, whose hatred of France made him urgent for a vigorous prosecution of the war, and with Lord Minto, whose care for English interests caused him to rejoice at Count St. Julien's disgrace, Maria Caroline co-operated cordially with the Austrian minister and the English ambassador, to disappoint the First Consul's desire for a pacific settlement, that would gain him credit for magnanimity and moderation in the hour of success. Speaking to the Emperor with a freedom, that would have been presumptuous in a mere minister, she led him to regard the moderation of Buonaparte's proposal as indicative of his keen desire for peace, and to regard the keen desire as showing, how he shrunk from the thought of another great battle, which might strip him of his freshest laurels, and even jeopardize his position at Paris.

Without wounding the Emperor's self-love with indiscreet satire, she entreated him to consider how much he would lose in honour and the world's esteem, by permitting a mushroom military adventurer to treat him with forbearance and generosity. During the vacillations of her son-in-law, Maria Caroline's spirits rose or fell, in proportion as he inclined to war or peace. They dropped to the lowest depression on the 27th September, 1800. The

day of Emma Hamilton's departure was also the day on which Francis returned to the capital, with the armistice of Hohenlinden, duly signed and sealed. 'The day of your departure from Vienna,' Maria Caroline wrote from Schönbrun on 17th October, 1800, to her friend, 'and of our separation was fatal for me; it was the day of the Emperor's return with that fatal armistice—signed. Thus the ill omen of your departure, which I felt so sensibly, resulted in sad events.' The *Guerre d'Hiver* having become inevitable, the Queen's spirits rose high. After all her martial disappointments, she could still hope that the next battle would make her fortune.

Well-informed of the part she played in the business of several months, Buonaparte had reason to think Maria Caroline the 'baneful influence' that, thwarting his purpose, constrained him, at much cost and inconvenience, to bring Francis to a more reasonable frame of mind by the *Guerre d'Hiver*. On coming to this conclusion, after a dispassionate review of the ruling woman's interference between him and the Emperor, the conqueror of Marengo put another mark to the lengthening score of injuries, for which he would punish the restless and implacable Queen of Naples.

As Malta surrendered to the British so early as the 5th of September, 1800, news of the event may have reached Vienna before the friends bade one another farewell. But that Emma Hamilton left the Austrian capital before the particulars of the capitulation had come to the Queen's knowledge appears from the

following passage of the letter written by the Queen to Lady Hamilton on the 17th of October, 1800:

> 'You see Malta is taken and the French driven out. That is altogether good; but the King and all of us have been keenly mortified at seeing no representative of us in the capitulation, though we have troops, artillery, munitions and positive rights in the island. The English flag floats alone there. That causes much [? laughter] at seeing us so completely duped, and it is especially grievous to receive so serious an injury from one's friends. Otherwise, the affair would be nothing. We are so friendly to England, that we are charmed that the great power should guard a post which commands Sicily. But the [neglect of] forms, the slight after so much care, confidence, cordiality and such enormous aid and expences on our part, are grievous. Behold the truth. How many times have I thought, if my friends had been there, that would not have happened.'

That the Queen had ground for complaint in this business is undeniable. But our annexation of Malta was justified by the necessities of our position. England needed the island; and it is for the advantage of humanity that England should have what she needs. Had it been restored to the effete and dishonoured knights, or committed to the keeping of Ferdinand, the island would have fallen to France, in whose hands it would have been a constant source of trouble to all other Mediterranean powers, and a hindrance to civilization.

The *Guerre d'Hiver* had accomplished its purpose on the Emperor's temper. The armistice of Steyer had been concluded on the 24th of December, 1800, and the negociations for the treaty of Luneville were

in progress, when, to the amazement of the belligerents, who had just laid down their arms, General Damas left Rome, on the 14th of January, 1801, and marched, with ten thousand Neapolitan soldiers, upon the few French troops that were quartered in Tuscany. The Neapolitan general's momentary success over the handful of French in Sienna was speedily cancelled. With the promptitude and address of a capable commander, Miollis gained a decisive victory over Damas, whose retreat to Rome was quicker than his advance upon Sienna. What good Ferdinand hoped to effect by sending this small army into the field, when he knew of the armistice of Steyer, it would be vain to conjecture. Stirring Buonaparte to wrath, this military escapade would have occasioned the Bourbon sovereign the immediate loss of his continental throne, had not Maria Caroline, by a dexterous movement, saved him from so grave a disaster.

Murat was preparing to descend upon Naples with an overwhelming army, to avenge the insult offered to France and her First Consul, when Maria Caroline despatched a letter and ambassadors to the Emperor Paul entreating him to preserve her husband, her unfortunate children, herself from impending ruin. It rested with the Emperor of the Russias to speak in her behalf the few words, that would appease the First Consul's anger, and rescue an unhappy queen from an enormous calamity. In addressing Paul in this strain, the Queen was appealing to the chivalric sentiment, that was a redeeming quality of the northern emperor's

ignoble nature. She had other reasons for thinking he would help her. The Queen, who seized every occasion for honouring Nelson as her liberator and saviour, had of course been no less profuse in her avowals of gratitude to the Emperor for the recovery of Naples; and the Queen's flattery had been even more agreeable to Paul than to the English Admiral. At the beginning of 1801, the Queen and the Emperor had been recently drawn into closer union and warmer friendship by a common grievance. Resenting England's occupation of Malta, Maria Caroline had in Paul an ally who resented the same affair far more fiercely, and, in his rage at the 'act of robbery,' threw himself cordially into the northern coalition against England, that was expected to prove alike beneficial to France and hurtful to Great Britain. At such a crisis, the First Consul could not afford to disregard Paul's petition for clemency towards Their Majesties of the Sicilies. Moreover, Maria Caroline knew that Paul's intervention in her behalf would tickle the First Consul's vanity.

The event justified Maria Caroline's action. Dispatching Count Lawacheff to plead for the Queen in Paris, Paul ordered the ambassador to wait upon Her Majesty on his way to France. The order was favourable to Maria Caroline's interests; for the ambassador was so fascinated by her beauty, and impressed by her dignity in misfortune, that he proceeded on his mission with a resolve to serve her to the utmost of his ability.

To oblige the Emperor Paul, the First Consul consented to play the part of a magnanimous conqueror.

Not that he was in any humour to disregard the interests of France whilst yielding to Paul's prayer. Their Majesties of the Two Sicilies were heavily punished for the military escapade. Omitted from the treaty of Luneville, they were humiliated and squeezed hard by the treaty of Florence, the negociations for which severe compact were not entered upon till Ferdinand had withdrawn his troops from the Papal dominions. By the treaty of Florence, it was provided, amongst other things, (1) that the ports of the Two Sicilies should be closed to English and Turkish vessels, so long as England and the Porte should persist in their war against France, and until the settlement of the maritime questions between Great Britain and the northern powers, (2) that Ferdinand should resign to the French republic Porto Longone, his possessions in the Island of Elba, his dominions of the Presidii of Tuscany, and the principality of Piombino, (3) that Ferdinand should, within three months, pay five hundred thousand francs in compensation to French agents or citizens, and (4) that the King of Naples should set at liberty all those of his subjects who were in prison for their political opinions, and should suffer all those of his subjects who were in exile for their political opinions to return to their country, and cause them to be re-instated in their forfeited property. But the hardest terms of the treaty were the secret conditions. By these conditions it was stipulated that, so long as France should remain at war with the Porte and Great Britain, four thousand French soldiers should be quartered in the Abruzzi, from Tronto to Sangro,

and twelve thousand French soldiers be quartered in the provinces from Tronto to Bradano; and that Ferdinand should supply these foreign troops with sufficient flour for their wants, and five hundred thousand francs monthly towards their pay.

The terms were hard; but worse calamity was avoided, or at least deferred. Ferdinand retained his continental crown, and was sensible that he owed it to his Queen's cleverness. By rendering him this important service, Maria Caroline recovered much of her husband's former confidence in her judgment and political capacity.

On the withdrawal of the French troops from Neapolitan territory, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Amiens (March 25th, 1802), Ferdinand re-established his court at Naples, where he was received with manifestations of popular delight, that are admitted by Colletta to have been for 'the most part sincere;' but, though she had saved the crown, the Queen was welcomed far less cordially by the Neapolitans, when she returned some two months later to the capital, after an absence of nearly two years from her husband's dominions. That the populace, who greeted Luigia Sanfelice's destroyer with every sign of passionate joy on his return from Palermo, regarded Maria Caroline with coldness and even with signs of repugnance on her re-appearance amongst them after so long a sojourn in a foreign land, was less due to her policies than to the badness of her reputation. Whether she deserved this reputation is a question that will be considered more fully in a subsequent chapter. For the present it is

enough to say, that by this time the false tongues of her political enemies had succeeded in making her generally regarded in the European capitals, and almost universally regarded at Naples, as an indescribably licentious woman. Even in Italy, tolerant of domestic irregularities though Italy was in the Queen's time, there were limits of immorality which no woman could exceed without provoking social opprobrium; and Maria Caroline would have passed far beyond those limits, had only a tithe of the stories told to her infamy been true.

Notwithstanding their aversion to the Queen, the Neapolitans were thankful for her return. They could take a brighter view of their financial position, as they would be relieved of the charges for the pompous court, which Maria Caroline had maintained in the land of her birth. Beneficial to the trade of the capital, the re-appearance of the court made them hopeful for a general revival of prosperity. Moreover, with their never-failing appetite for gaiety, they were thankful for a change which enabled them to participate in the festivities of the royal circle. The celebrations of the royal marriages, which were arranged and consummated during the brief cessation from war, enabled high and low, the gentle and the simple to think lightly of their recent troubles. A widower, through Maria Clementina's untimely death, Prince Francis of Naples was at liberty to make a second marriage with Isabella of Spain. At the same time, Marie-Antoinette of Naples gave her hand in wedlock to Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias. In the rejoicings for these marriages, which promised

to close the rupture between the Sicilian and Spanish Bourbons, by uniting the royal children of Naples no less closely to their Spanish cousins than previous marriages had united them to their mother's people, the light-hearted Neapolitans imagined they had come to the end of their troubles, and would henceforth be happy for ever.

The pleasant dream was brief. Royal marriages are more calculated to drain than replenish exhausted treasuries. On the collapse of the hollow and insincere treaty of Amiens, the French garrisons reappeared in Ferdinand's dominions. The revival of trade, from which the Neapolitans had hoped so much, was insignificant in comparison with the financial difficulties of the government. The return of the Parthenopeian exiles from banishment was followed quickly by conspiracies, similar to those which had engaged Maria Caroline's attention during the six years immediately preceding the Parthenopeian revolt. 'Once a conspirator always a conspirator.' Some of the exiles of '99 had troubled Buonaparte not a little in Paris, before he arranged by the Treaty of Florence to relieve the French capital of such dangerous guests, and send them back to their native country, where they would not fail to harass and weaken the King he despised, and the Queen he detested. Coming back to Naples with undiminished hostility to the crown and a fiercer hatred of the Queen, the Neapolitan Jacobins lost no time in renewing their former practices. To frustrate their tricks, Maria Caroline was no less quick in returning to her old expedients for maintaining order. Even

whilst the joy-bells were ringing for the royal marriages, spies were at work to discover the secret machinations of the Jacobin leaders. Three months had not passed since the weddings, when on the 11th January, 1803, Ferdinand issued a proclamation, declaring that justice and necessity required him to take energetic measures against the conspiracies, which traitors at home were fomenting against his authority, with the sympathy and aid of exiles, who had declined to avail themselves of his permission to return to their native land. It may be left to the reader to imagine the incidents that followed as matters of course on this announcement,—the arbitrary arrests of suspected traitors, the grave charges and also the frivolous charges on which individuals were sent to trial, and the doings of the State Junta who received instructions to act with energy and expedition against the revolutionists.

Though Maria Caroline, in her keen mortification at the preliminary articles for the abortive convention, wrote with great asperity to Emma Hamilton about Great Britain's cruel desertion of her cause, Monsieur Gagnière is strangely at fault in imagining that the Queen's change from admiration to hatred of England dated from the Treaty of Amiens, between Great Britain, France, Holland and Spain. Monsieur Gagnière would scarcely have written of the Queen's discontent at the treaty, 'Marie-Caroline ne le pardonna jamais. De cette époque date sa volte-face,' had he given due consideration to her expressions of gratitude to the English government, for instructing Nelson to be the jealous guardian of

Their Sicilian Majesties' interests on his return to the Mediterranean in the summer of 1803. The orders Nelson received from the Admiralty on this point were in the following words:

'Your Lordship is to be very attentive in observing if the French have any design of attacking the kingdoms of Naples or Sicily, and your Lordship is to exert yourself to counteract it, and to take, sink, burn, or destroy any ships or vessels which may be so employed, and to afford to His Sicilian Majesty and his subjects all the protection and assistance which may be in your power, consistently with a due attention to the other important objects entrusted to your care.'

On receiving a copy of these words, sent by Nelson to Their Sicilian Majesties through General Acton, Maria Caroline overflowed with delight at the intelligence and gratitude to the mighty nation that had again ordered the Admiral to take her and her family under his protection. On July 6th, 1803, she wrote to Nelson:

'I have read your letter, my worthy and respected Lord, addressed to General Acton and to Elliot, which has produced a lively sensation. You enter into our position and circumstances perfectly, in prudently employing the strictest vigilance both by sea and land, so that we may not be compromised, and no pretext supplied to the destroyers of the human race for devouring us. You render us the most essential service, and have another claim on our eternal gratitude;—depend on our vigilance, which is excited by a complete mistrust and knowledge of the activity and perfidy of those we watch, and you shall be informed of everything. What you send me increases my gratitude towards your loyal Government, and my satisfaction at their having chosen your worthy self for the command in the Mediterranean is infinite, and adds greatly to my tranquillity and safety. The stationing of a ship constantly in the Gulf of Naples to be

ready for any occasion augments the obligations of my family and myself towards you.'

Pettigrew's 'Life of Nelson,' vol. ii, pp. 305, 306.

Something more than five months later (December 10th, 1803), the Queen wrote to Nelson:

'My dear and worthy Lord,

'I hasten with great satisfaction on the present occasion to renew my sentiments of esteem, attachment and gratitude for all that you have already done, and continue to do for us, not only having saved us from being compromised by the painful and disagreeable circumstances in which we were placed, but also for continuing with your usual vigilance to watch over our safety. We are on the eve of a great crisis. May heaven vouchsafe our prayers, and your great nation reap the advantage and glory that my heart desires for it, which would have an important influence on our situation, and that of all Europe,—ours is always dangerous and painful, having pretended friends but real enemies in the centre of our kingdoms, practising injustice solely. I place our interests in your worthy hands, my Lord. I rely on your care, prudence and friendship, and I pray you believe in my eternal gratitude and esteem . . . .'

Pettigrew's 'Life of Nelson,' vol. ii, p. 353.

These expressions of gratitude to Nelson, and the loyal government who had again dispatched him to her rescue, and to the great nation whose policy he was carrying out in the Mediterranean, are scarcely reconcilable with Monsieur Gagnière's notion that Maria Caroline never forgave England for her part in the peace, which was in effect nothing more than a truce.

Stationing one of his best ships in the Gulf of Naples, in order that Their Sicilian Majesties should have the means of retreating at their will to Sicily, Nelson wrote to the English Government, urging them to send troops in sufficient number for defend-

ing Sicily, putting garrisons in Gaeta and the castles of Naples, and sending a force into Calabria for the support of its warlike peasants, 'in case the French should be too imperious in their demands.' The state of affairs certainly justified the counsel. The French garrisons in Neapolitan territory already numbered over thirteen thousand men. Computed at seventy thousand men, the French army in other parts of Italy was steadily growing. Nelson held and expressed the strongest opinion that this growing army was designed for the conquest of Ferdinand's continental dominions; and Maria Caroline, Ferdinand, and his ministers were all of the same opinion. 'I have made up my mind,' Nelson wrote to Emma Hamilton in July, 1803, 'that it is part of the plan of the Corsican scoundrel to conquer the kingdom of Naples. He has marched thirteen thousand men into the kingdom, on the Adriatic side; and he will take possession with as much shadow of right of Gaeta and Naples: and if the poor king remonstrates, or allows us to secure Sicily, he will call it war, and declare a conquest.' Whilst Their Sicilian Majesties were thus menaced with a French invasion, they were utterly without the means to resist it. Lacking money for the punctual payment of their soldiers and civil servants, they were for all purposes of war without a fleet, the majority of Maria Caroline's best ships having been destroyed soon after the outbreak of the Parthenopeian revolt. In their poverty the King and Queen had for months been living in comparative retirement, because they had not the means needful for the maintenance of a stately court.

Cognizant as he was of Maria Caroline's financial distress, it may surprise some readers that Nelson was astonished and pained by her neglect to assign Emma Hamilton a pension, on learning the particulars of the straitened circumstances in which she had been left by Sir William Hamilton. There was no reason why the Queen should aggravate her own trouble, even in the smallest degree, for the enrichment of the adventuress whom she had already paid so liberally for her services of friendship. Though good breeding required her to express sympathy for Emma's pecuniary disappointment (for which, by the way, Sir William Hamilton had prepared her throughout their union), Maria Caroline probably thought the beauty had been fairly well provided for. The Queen, of course, knew many women of far higher birth and quality than Sir William Hamilton's widow, any one of whom would gladly have changed places with her, in respect to affairs of money. With eight hundred pounds a-year from her settlement, eight hundred pounds lying at her banker's, and some five thousand pounds' worth of goods and chattels, Emma Hamilton as a private woman in London was richer than Maria Caroline with a queenly revenue, that was greatly inadequate to the claims upon it. But questions respecting Lady Hamilton were questions that touched the one weak point of Nelson's noble nature, and in respect to them he was unreasonable.

Resenting what he regarded as the Queen's meanness in forbearing to pension her friend, Nelson was still more piqued by the coldness and caution with which Her Majesty responded to his request, that she

would address the English Government in support of Lady Hamilton's claims to remuneration for her alleged services to England. Declining to write to English ministers with her own hand on behalf of the importunate petitioner, Maria Caroline reluctantly consented to write to the Neapolitan ambassador in London a letter (which he might show to English ministers), instructing him to assure the English Government that she should feel pleasure on hearing that Lady Hamilton's case had received their favourable consideration. One does not see what more Maria Caroline could have done in the business. But it was not enough to satisfy Nelson, who was probably the more pained by Her Majesty's coldness and caution, because he regarded them as indicative that she was neither without suspicion of the secret nature of his intimacy with Lady Hamilton, nor without knowledge of what London society had been for some time whispering to the discredit of Sir William Hamilton's widow.

Nelson had scarcely returned to the Mediterranean, when he began to feel that Maria Caroline was less affectionately disposed to his enchantress. It ruffled him that the letter, in which the Queen welcomed him to the scene of his command, contained no reference to Emma. 'I am vexed she did not mention you!' he wrote to Lady Hamilton in July, 1803, on sending her a copy of the defective epistle. 'I can only account for it, by hers being a political letter.' In the middle of the next month (August, 1803), he wrote, 'Do you ever hear of the Queen? I fear that she is a time-serving woman, and cares for no one

except for those at the moment, who may be useful to her.' However, *time will show.*' Time having shown that Emma Hamilton would get a pension neither from the Queen's purse, nor through Her Majesty's influence with the London cabinet, Maria Caroline fell steadily in Nelson's esteem. From being admirable, she dropped so low as to become almost contemptible, in his eyes. She ruled ill. She was crafty and selfish. Though his own good sense and his knowledge of the Neapolitan court saved him from believing the worst tales about the Queen, which so far surpassed what Sir William Hamilton had in former time told him of her coquetries and other feminine foibles, the Admiral became more and more apt to season his letters to Lady Hamilton with disparagement of Her Majesty. None the less vigilant was he of her dynastic interests. Incapable of allowing his personal piques and private resentments to influence his conduct in affairs of duty, he guarded those interests no less jealously, now that he had learnt to dislike her, than he had guarded them in '98 and '99, when he delighted in her.

But though he afforded Maria Caroline a precious sense of security against enemies by sea, and could have destroyed any fleet that should have essayed to cut off her way of retreat to Sicily, Nelson was powerless over the forces, that were gathering on land to sweep her from the Continent. So long as he should remain in the Mediterranean, she could count on a safe passage to Palermo. But even if he had stayed there till the summer of 1806, his presence in the mid-land sea would not have prolonged her

tenure of Naples by a single day. Long since it had been decreed by fate, that the once beautiful Queen of Naples should be struck down by Buonaparte; and with all her cleverness she could not be wiser than fate, nor stronger than the man who was fate's servant.

Proclaimed Emperor of France on 18th May, 1804, Buonaparte, on the second of the following December, assumed the imperial crown, that was consecrated for his brow by Pius VII. In the first month of the new year (1805), indignant with Maria Caroline for having lured the Russians to Corfu, the brand-new Emperor Napoleon composed for the edification and guidance of his sister and cousin of Naples the equally curious and clever letter, in which with alternate flattery and menace he tried to wheedle and terrorize her into yielding to his authority.—'Is your Majesty's mind, so distinguished amongst women,' enquired the writer, 'so unable to divest itself of the prejudices of your sex, that you must treat affairs of state as though they were affairs of the heart?' Later in the singular composition, the Man of Fate delivered himself of this threat: 'Let your Majesty listen to this prophecy without impatience,—In the first war caused by you, you and your posterity will cease to reign, your children will wander, begging in the different countries of Europe for assistance for their parents.'

Four months later (26th May, 1805), having in the meantime learnt from intercepted letters how little his epistle of menace, flattery and false professions had affected her conduct, Napoleon re-iterated the threat

—not in words written only for the Queen's perusal, but words spoken in loud wrath to an assembly of princes, ambassadors, soldiers, statesmen—that for her discovered intrigues against him, Maria Caroline should cease to rule and cease to reign. In this high and courtly throng at Milan, the Prince di Cardito as ambassador-extraordinary from Naples had approached the Emperor and King, to offer messages of congratulation to his Imperial Majesty on his assumption of the iron crown of Italy, when the menace was thus repeated—not as a contingent threat, but as a threat to be surely carried into execution, for accomplished facts. 'Tell your Queen,' Napoleon exclaimed with passionate sternness to the unfortunate ambassador, 'that I am aware of her intrigues against France, and that she shall be cursed by her own sons, because, as a punishment for her breach of promise, I will not leave her or her house as much land as will cover their tombs.'

Sentence having been delivered thus dramatically in May, 1805, it would have been carried out before the end of the year, had not the insincere treaty between France and Naples (concluded between Talleyrand and Del Gallo on 21st of September, 1805, and ratified on 9th of October, 1805) occasioned a brief respite. How little intention their Majesties of Naples had of maintaining the neutrality, to which they were pledged by that agreement, appears from the cordial welcome they accorded to the insufficient army of eleven thousand Russians, two thousand Montenegrins, and six thousand English, who came to their assistance on the 19th of November. At this

time the Neapolitan army had fallen so low, as to number no more than fourteen thousand men (twelve thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry), fit for immediate action. How was this motley gathering of forces to withstand St. Cyr's legions and Massena's veterans,—a well-disciplined and thoroughly furnished French army of thirty-seven thousand of the best troops in Europe, that grew to an army of fifty thousand men in the course of a few weeks?

Time had brought about the position of affairs, which Ferdinand was anticipating, when on the 22nd May, 1804, he wrote to Nelson, 'To you, my dear Lord Nelson, I recommend myself again, whatever may occur in case of the war's renewal. The ship which you leave me becomes more and more necessary in this bay. My wife, son, and I shall divide ourselves. She will take upon herself the defence of Naples, my son of Calabria, and I shall go to Sicily, while the rest of the family will remove to Gaeta,'—words to be remembered by students of the 'Storia di Napoli,' because Colletta represents, that the dispersion of the royal family, which took place on the approach of Massena's army, was the result of panic rather than of predetermination.

No blame to Maria Caroline that Joseph Buonaparte entered Naples without a battle. In vain she entreated Damas and Lascey and Greig to save her from the shame of flying from the capital without having fought bravely to hold it. It was of no avail that she walked with her children, clothed in mourning, to St. Anne's chapel on the Chiaja, in the hope that the spectacle of so impressive a procession would

move the populace to cry aloud for war against the invader. At this dismal crisis Maria Caroline was no victim of terror. The Queen, who in December, '98, turned craven, from fear of dying as her sister had died, now longed for nothing more keenly than a battle, in which she might conquer or die, in a fashion befitting a daughter of Maria Theresa. It was not till she had done her utmost to compass this desire, that on the 11th February, 1806, when she could almost hear the French drums beating, she drew her children to her side, and went with them on board the ship that carried them to Palermo.

How many events of historic moment had been crowded into the three last months of 1805, and January, 1806! Ney had defeated the Austrians at Elchingen. Ulm had surrendered. Trafalgar had been fought. The slain were silently returning to dust under the plains of Austerlitz. Nelson was entombed in St. Paul's. Pitt had exchanged his 'Austerlitz look' for a gentler and less appalling expression—'the old, old look of death,' and was no longer in the world to form and foster coalitions against Napoleon.

The great English statesman had been dead little more than three weeks, when Joseph Buonaparte published from the Palazzo Reale of Naples the proclamation of his too great brother, containing the words of doom, 'Shall we pardon a fourth time? Shall we again confide in a court without faith, without honour, without prudence? No, no. The House of Naples has ceased to reign; its existence is incompatible with the repose of Europe, and with the honour of my Crown.'

Maria Caroline had ceased to be Queen of Naples in aught but the title, which she failed to justify by a second recovery of her husband's continental realm. But the man of fate was no stronger than fate permitted. He had vowed to leave her and her children without enough ground for their tombs. The threat was idle. The conqueror of so many lands failed to wrest Sicily from Ferdinand, and lived to see Maria Caroline's husband and children restored to Naples. The Queen died an exile in her native land,—the fallen Emperor died a prisoner on a petty and remote island.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE YEARS ROLL ON.

Mr. Elliot's Prediction—Emma Hamilton and the Prince of Wales—Horatia's Birth—The Prince of Wales's Condescension to the Hamiltons—Nelson's Jealousy and Wrath—'The little Dinner' at No. 23, Piccadilly—Maria Caroline's Concern for her unmarried Daughters—Her grief at Maria Clementina's death—Her Irritation at the Treaty of Amiens—Mrs. Cadogan in 'the north Country'—Her Industry at Merton—Emma Hamilton's Scorn for 'the Vagabonds in Power'—Her written Eulogy of Nelson to Nelson—Style that 'commands Attention'—'May his Enemies burst!'—Emma's Confidential Letters to Nelson—What she says of Horatia in those letters—'Our dearest Horatia'—'The Canons are so civil'—Anthems for Emma in Canterbury Cathedral—Parental Felicity—Nelson's Death and Funeral—Lady Hamilton returns to Society—Grief and 'good Cheer'—Mrs. Cadogan's care for her Daughter's Interest—Mr. Haslewood's 'canting Letter'—Emma Hamilton and Nelson's Executors—Their Differences of Opinion—Celebration of Emma Hamilton's Birthday in Clarges Street—'Bricks and Dust and stinking Paint.'

1800—1806 A.D.

At the opening of this chapter, it is necessary for me to speak briefly of an affair, of which I should have been silent, had it not resulted in a good deal of correspondence between Lady Hamilton *alias* Mrs. Thomson and Mr. Thomson *alias* Lord Nelson, that yields a considerable proportion of the conclusive documentary evidence that Horatia was Emma

Hamilton's offspring. On perusing the first chapter of the Third Part of this book, entitled 'Evidence and Controversy,' readers will see how fully justified I am in touching upon the overtures for a flirtation that were made to Lady Hamilton in the year 1801 by the heir-apparent to the throne of Great Britain.

In October, 1800, Mr. Elliot said to Mrs. St. George [Mrs. Trench] at Dresden, 'Lady Hamilton will captivate the Prince of Wales . . . . and play a great part in England.' A few months later it appeared probable that the prediction would be fulfilled. So early as the middle of January, 1801, when the hour for Horatia's birth was drawing near, the Prince of Wales confided to Mrs. Nisbet that Lady Hamilton had 'hit his fancy;' and Mrs. Nisbet lost no time in carrying the intelligence on to her dear friend Lady Hamilton, who was not a little elated at knowing she had struck the fancy of His Royal Highness, though she took care to speak and write to Nelson of the affair with an affectation of regret and of annoyance.

During the later weeks of January and the earlier days of February the Prince of Wales had few or no opportunities for approaching the lady, who had hit his fancy: for even Lady Hamilton found it necessary to withdraw from the world's observation some few days before the birth of her child and to remain in retirement for a few days after that clandestine event. Taking to her bed at No. 23, Piccadilly, towards the close of January, 1801, under pretext of an extremely bad cold, she remained inaccessible to 'society,' till she had taken the infant

by night (probably, the night of the 6th February) to Nurse Gibson's house in Little Titchfield Street, Marylebone. A few days later, when she had appeared again in society, looking all the more delicate and beautiful for her recent illness, the Prince with a smitten fancy seized an occasion for entreating Sir William Hamilton to 'obleege' him with an invitation to No. 23, Piccadilly, in order that he might have the supreme felicity of congratulating Lady Hamilton on her restoration to health, and hearing her sing some of his favourite airs. It had never been the Prince's good fortune to hear Lady Hamilton and Banti sing together; and His Royal Highness declared himself to have been for some time dying for that good fortune. Of course, Sir William Hamilton avowed himself duly sensible of the great honour the Prince conferred on him by the flattering proposal. Sir William was quick to declare that Lady Hamilton would, of course, be no less sensible of the Prince's goodness, and delighted to do his royal bidding.

On hearing of the prince's gracious condescension to Sir William and Lady Hamilton, the Admiral at Plymouth went wild with jealous fury. One may not put on paper all the hard truths Nelson clothed in hardest terms on hearing that the Prince of Wales had determined to dine at No. 23, Piccadilly, and pass a musical evening in Lady Hamilton's drawing-room. A verbatim report of the Admiral's utterances about 'that —— fellow's audacity' would result in the speedy exhaustion of the printer's stock of large *D's* and small *d's*. What! should that infernal —— —— approach so peerless a paragon of woman-

kind, for the purpose of preying on her virtue, and tarnishing her spotless and radiant honour? Should he, such a matchless —— and ——, take her down to dinner? sit beside her at table? pour sweet, intoxicating, poisonous praise into the ear of so lovely and guileless a creature? Should they contend with one another in persiflage? clink glasses with one another, as the wine, beloved by Emma, went round the table? Merciful Heavens! they would talk over their love-songs, and sing them together! He would bring his infernal 'friends' (what friends!) about her, and then the world would think and say any ill of her! It might—ay, it would—even be said that she was a faithless wife. What could Sir William Hamilton mean by pressing his wife to know any man who would be likely to lure her from the path of matronly honour?

To pacify the Admiral, Sir William and Lady Hamilton promised him that, though they could neither decline to receive the prince nor omit to make a party to meet him, the party should number only a few persons. On Thursday, February 13th, 1801, Sir William Hamilton wrote to Nelson:

'My dear Lord,—Whether Emma will be able to write to you to-day or not is a question, as she has got one of her terrible sick head-aches. Amongst other things that vex her is that we have been drawn to be under the necessity of giving a dinner to the Prince of Wales on Sunday next. He asked himself, having expressed his strong desire of hearing Banti's and Emma's voices together. I am well aware of the danger that would attend the Prince of Wales frequenting our house. Not that I fear that Emma could ever be induced to act contrary to the prudent conduct she has

hitherto pursued, but the world is so ill-natured that the worst construction is put upon the most innocent actions.—As this dinner must be, or the Prince of Wales would be offended, I shall keep it strictly to the musical part, invite only Banti, her husband and Taylor, and, as I wish to show a civility to Davison, I have sent him an invitation. In short, we shall get rid of it as well as we can, and guard against more meetings of the same sort. Emma would really have gone any lengths to have avoided Sunday's dinner. But I thought it would not be prudent to break with the Prince, who really has shown the greatest civility to us when we were last in England, and since we returned, so she has at last acquiesced in my opinion. I have been thus explicit, as I know well your lordship's way of thinking, and your kind attachment to us and to everything that concerns us.'

So the little dinner-party of seven took place at No. 23, Piccadilly, on Sunday, February 22nd, 1801. Nelson, at Plymouth, ate never a morsel throughout that day of misery to himself, of temptation to Emma, and of shame to Sir William Hamilton, who had constrained his wife to jeopardize her reputation by allowing the naughty Prince of Wales to break bread within her walls. His Royal Highness may well have remarked on the fewness and insignificance of the people who had been asked to meet him. Emma Hamilton doubtless permitted herself to be taken down to dinner by the prince, and even sat next him at table, notwithstanding Nelson's prayers that she would keep as far away from him as possible. Possibly she even went through the compromising ceremony of 'knelling glasses' with the greatest gentleman in Europe. It is also conceivable that the lovely and ever garrulous beauty and the prince of faultless form hit each other's fancy, and that Emma enjoyed

the little dinner far more than she admitted in her next budget to the Admiral. Anyhow, nothing worse came of the Prince of Wales's attentions to Lady Hamilton than the uneasiness they caused Nelson for several weeks.

Some time about the day of this little dinner at No. 23, Piccadilly ('opposite the Green Park,' as Mrs. Cadogan was careful to state in the directions of her letters), Lady Hamilton received a letter of small talk and cordial enquiries from Maria Caroline, who at the time of writing (February 11th, 1801, Vienna) was trembling for Italy. 'Adieu, my dear Miledy,' says Her Majesty, 'send me word how you feel, if you are happy, what your prospects are; all that concerns yourself.' In a postscript the writer adds, with motherly concern for the future of her unmarried daughters, 'All my dear children make their compliments to you. They are all well, thank God! But our misfortunes leave me no hope of establishing them.' That Lady Hamilton in her reply did not give a very cheerful account of herself appears from the opening passages of the ensuing letter (written in Italian), in which the unfortunate queen again revealed her chief maternal anxiety:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

'March 31, 1801.

'My dear Miledy,—Your letter has greatly distressed me. I see you are neither so happy nor so contented as my sincere and grateful affection, my sterling friendship would have you. But the present are hard times, made for suffering. I have been again very ill, and did not expect to recover. Thank God! at the present time I am again on my feet. My dear children, thanks to Heaven, are well

and are truly a comfort to me. But when I consider the difficulty I have to establish them, and think of what will become of them should I die, I regret having survived the tempest of 23rd December,* 1799. We should have all been overwhelmed! With nothing after us,—I should not have known the horrors and the acts of ingratitude,—the entry of the French into the kingdom and the dreadful peace, which has been imposed upon us. All that brought me to the gates of death. To-day I am again able to stir; but that will not last,—my soul is too broken. Leopold also has been severely ill; and they had to bleed him for the first time. My daughters are well content, and I hope to go soon into the country. I shall do it with great pleasure, for the trees and flowers, at least, are not ungrateful. Adieu, my dear Miledy. I hope we shall soon meet again. You may count on my eternal friendship and gratitude.—CAROLINA.'

Written at Vienna, in grief for Maria Clementina's death and in irritation at the preliminary articles for the Peace of Amiens, the next letter sent by Maria Caroline to her friend in England, after a silence of several months, is touchingly eloquent of the woman's sorrow and the Queen's bitterness:

Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton.

[6th December, 1801.]

'MY DEAR MILEDY,

'I avail myself of the departure of this courier to write to you. You have of course shared in the grievous misfortune I have experienced in losing my dear and good daughter-in-law. It destroyed the single happiness that remained to me, in a perfect union and domestic attachment.

* In the original of the Italian epistle the Queen wrote of the 'tempesta dell 23 di 8bre' without giving the date of the year. Clearly she should have written '10bre.' The clerical slip may, perhaps, be regarded as an indication that the fatal October of '93 came to her memory as she was writing of the tempest of another month and later year.

This dear and good princess died like a saint, and her husband is in the deepest despair. My dear children do nothing but mourn for their sister-in-law, who was a tender sister to them, and would at my death (which by reason of my troubles and griefs cannot be distant) have been a mother to them. I flatter myself (though you write so rarely to me, that I imagine myself half-forgotten by you) that you still preserve enough recollection of me, to participate in this cruel blow, and be the more sensible of it, as a thousand painful circumstances hinder me from establishing my two daughters, whom I must take back to Naples, probably to remain there for life, without their dear sister-in-law and friend.—Tell me of your health, of the Chevalier [Hamilton], of your projects. My compliments to the worthy, virtuous Lord Nelson, to whom I shall ever be grateful, although his speech in parliament for keeping the Mediterranean and Malta, useless to us, &c., &c. (pour soutenir l'inutilité de la mediteranie), has afflicted me greatly. It is true that he only followed the example of the bitter and unjust Lord Hawkesbury, of Pitt even and others. It is decided to call Italy a French province and dependence, and the Mediterranean free [to the French], so that they may furnish all the needful resources for the Levant and Egypt, and have all the commerce. But it is not for women to reason: we can only sigh and shed tears. My attachment to England has been thorough and complete, and its fruits have been all our marches, misfortunes, losses and griefs that will endure for life. Therefore, I confess, this total desertion is cruel, the more so as I can only be silent, when everyone inquires of me mockingly, "Are you cured of your Anglomania?" I suffer and the tears stifle me. Unfortunate though it be for me, my attachment cannot extinguish itself. That is the reason, why I desire vividly that England may not in the course of ten years repent this peace, which she is on the point of concluding with a nation, whose restless energy and prosperity will result in efforts that will surprise England and inconvenience her. But I am a woman, and ought not to talk, nor even to enquire, nor even—that I may escape more sorrow—think of the matter.

'Tell me all that relates to and concerns yourself, for in that I take interest with my whole heart. I can tell you

nothing of my projects and doings; they depend on the king's orders, the withdrawal of the French and on the weather. I expect to go at the beginning of the spring to my post, to die there; and if my children were established, I should regard the moment of my death as the moment of deliverance, as that would prevent my seeing more misfortunes. But till my children have an assured lot (though in these times no one can be said to have an assured lot, not even those who deem theirs most secure) I desire to live in so far as I am necessary to them; and afterwards I shall leave this life without regret. Adieu, my lady: I have spoken to you with frankness and sincerity, as it was my custom to do. I hope your sentiments are unchanged, mine are unchangeable. Believe me to be ever your sincere and grateful friend,

'CHARLOTTE.

'P.S.—Thousands and thousands of compliments to the good and honourable Chevalier Hamilton, and to the hero of the Nile the valorous Nelson (et au heros du Nile le Valeureux Nelson.'

That Maria Caroline wrote thus frankly and cordially to Emma Hamilton, nearly a year and a quarter after their separation, disproves the story that Her Majesty was quick to show her disinclination to remain on a footing of intimacy with the Englishwoman, who had served her purpose and would not be able to serve it again. From the passage of the letter, touching Emma Hamilton's neglect to write to Vienna, it appears that the blacksmith's daughter was more accountable than the Queen for the fewness of the letters which had passed between them, since they exchanged kisses of farewell.

In the spring of 1801, Lady Hamilton received the following note from her energetic and always industrious mother, who was making visits to her kindred and old friends in the north country,—

Mrs. Cadogan to Lady Hamilton, No. 23, Piccadilly, opposite to the Green Park, London.

'Chester, 16th April, 1801.

'My dear Emma,

'I have to inform you that I arriv'd in Chester yesterday, and I am happy to say that I left all friends in Hawarden very well. I mean to stop in Chester 2 days, and then go to Liverpool and to stop there two or three days, and then I mean to proceed on my journey to Manchester. I beg you will send me Mrs. Blackburn's directions, and send me every particular how I am to proceed about the little girl. The next letter you send, you must direct for me at John Moore, Moore Street, Liverpool. My sister Kidd and all the family sends (*sic*) their kind love to you, and they are all very well. Give my kind love to Sir William and accept the same yourself from your loving and affectionate mother,

'M. Cadogan.

'[P.S.] Sarah sends her love to her mother and sisters and brothers, and to you, which I am happy to say we are both well.'

In the opening months of 1802, Mrs. Cadogan found enough work for her busy fingers in stitching window-blinds and other items of upholstery for Merton Place, which Nelson entered for the first time in the later part of October, 1801. Doing half-a-hundred things to bring the new household into perfect order, the active Welshwoman had voice in the deliberations and also a share in the manual labour, which in the course of a few months made a fair garden of the neglected grounds about the villa, that is so pleasantly and in some respects so sadly associated with the Admiral's story. 'We are very busy planting,' Emma Hamilton wrote from Merton on 13th Feb, 1802, to Captain Bedford, 'and I am as much

amused with pigs and hens, as I was at the Court of Naples ambassadress.' In the same letter, (lying at the British Museum), she remarks in her own peculiar vein of good-natured self-conceit and piquant 'naturalness,'

'Nelson, the glorious Nelson, is the truly good man in his retirement. He seldom goes to town, and for that reason he is much desired and sought for. "Keeping men off you keep them on" will do for men as well as women. If ever he is employed, which will be if their is a new war, you will be one of his select, for such he calls you; but he will not take such a command as he had last year. *Shame* on them for giving it him! But Nelson is a man of a superior class. The most trivial command he makes of importance, and I look upon the attack off Boulogne as the bravest thing ever done. It was not his fault it did not succeed. Alas! the poor brave little Parker! but we must not dwell on trist ideas . . . . . The medals for Copenhagen are not yet given. These vagabonds in power are not worthy of great victorys. I had some lines sent me the other day on seeing the medal of Julius Cæsar after the battle of Pharnaces—Veni, Vidi, Vici,—

"Two-thirds of Cæsar's boasted fame thou, Nelson, must resign,
To come and see is Parker's only claim, to conquer only thine."

Are they not very neat?'

From the pen of the same writer, Nelson was so fortunate as to receive, on an early day of April, 1802, a letter of eulogy, that can scarcely have afforded him unqualified satisfaction:

Lady Hamilton to Lord Nelson.

'Merton, 2nd of April [1802?].

'Our Dear Glorious Friend, immortal and great Nelson! what shall I say to you on this day? My heart and feelings are so overpowered that I cannot give vent to my full soul, to tell you, as an English woman gratefull to her country's Saviour, what I feil towards you, and as a

much loved friend that has the happiness of being beloved, esteemed and admired by the good and virtuous Nelson. What must be my pride, my glory to say this day, I have the happiness of being with him one of his select; and how grateful to God Almighty do I feil in having preserved you throu' such glorious danger, that never before ever got throu' with such courage, honner and success. Nelson! I want cloquence to tell you all I feil, to avow the sentiments of respect and adoration with which you have inspired me! Admiration and delight you must ever raise in all who behold you, looking on you only as the Guardian of England, but how far short are those sensations to what I, as a much loved friend, feil! and I must confess to you the predominant sentiments of my heart will ever be, till it ceases to beat, the most unfeigned anxiety for your happiness, and the sincerest and most disinterested determination to promote your felicity even at the hazard of my life.

'Excuse this scrawl, my dearest friend! but next to talking with you is writing to you. I wish this day I could be only for 24 hours a Queen for your sake, to shew you by facts what I can only do by words. God bless you, my ever dear Nelson! Long may you live to be the admiration of Europe, the delight of your country, and the idol of your constant attached

'EMMA.

[P.S.] 'Emma, the real, sincere and true friend sends this greeting—

'To the Victor of the Nile, the Conqueror of Copenhagen, the Terror and Stop of the northern Confederacy, St. Vincent's Prop and the Hero of the 14th of February, the Restorer of the King of Naples, the Preserver of Rome, the Avenger of Kings, the Guardian Angel of England—and the Man of Men who in this war [h]as been in one hundred and 24 battles, and come off covered with glory, honner, vertue and modesty, the pride of his country and friends.'

Dr. Pettigrew and other biographers having made it a ground of complaint against Lady Nelson that her letters were 'too trivial and insignificant to command her husband's attention,' it is only fair to that

unhappy and cruelly maligned gentlewoman to admit that her letters to Nelson were not in the style of this remarkable effusion, which possibly caused the Admiral to think of Emma's favourite wine. It was more to Emma's disadvantage than to her credit that there were times when she could not write to Nelson, or about him, without adopting a style more likely to 'command attention' than to win approval. Mr. Alexander Davison cannot have speedily forgotten the terms in which she wrote to him on the 20th of September, 1802, of her hero, and about the triumphant tour through the midland counties and to Wales, which she had recently made with the Admiral, Sir William Hamilton, and Mr. Greville. 'I am sorry,' Emma wrote, 'you are not near us to keep the Hero of Hero's birthday [on the 29th]; but you will drink his health . . . . . We have had a most charming tour, which will burst some of them. So let the enimies of the greatest man alive; and bless his friends!' Notwithstanding her strong affection for the Admiral, it never occurred to Lady Nelson to write to her friends that she hoped his last victory would cause his enemies 'to burst.' But then, she was not the possessor of a literary style qualified to 'command attention.'

Through Nelson's care to destroy the papers which might prematurely reveal interesting secrets to curious searchers, few of the letters written by Emma on shore to her hero at sea remain with us. But, thanks to Mr. Morrison, I can give the world two choice examples of the kind of gossip she sent the Admiral in her ill-written letters:

Lady Hamilton to Lord Nelson.

'Canterbury: October 4th [1805].

'My most dear Nelson,

'I forgot to tell you that Lord Sidmouth's son stab'd himself at Worthing about a month ago. That was what H Adington aluded to. He is not dead. It is the Clerk of the Pells, the boy you heard of as being so young to have such a place. Lord Douglas [h]as just call'd. He would have given much to have seen you was in England. He looks upon you as the greatest of all human beings. The Dr. has invited him to dinner to-morrow. The poor old Duke [of Queensberry] must have a letter every day from me. I have begin to fret at not having letters from you. I send you a letter of Miss Conners as their is much in it [about] our dear girl [Horatia]. You will like it. I allsoe had one from my mother who doats on her. She says she could not live without her. What a blessing for her parents to have such a child, so sweet altho' so young, so amiable! God spare her to them—Amen. Be assured my life, my soul, of your own Emma's fondest affections. You are my all of good! Heaven bless you. Yours, only yours [Emma].'

Addressed to 'Viscount Nelson, Duke of Bronté . . to the care of Captain Keates, His M. Ship *Superb*, Portsmouth.'

Writers of authority having so often remarked that Lady Hamilton never admitted she was Horatia's mother, readers should observe the evidence afforded by this letter that she used to make the admission in her confidential letters to Nelson. Writing of her as 'our dear girl,' Emma speaks of Horatia as her own issue by Nelson: 'What a blessing for *her* [*i.e.*, Horatia's] parents to have such a child!' Who but the writer and Nelson can be referred to by 'her parents'? Whilst Nelson indisputably believed himself to be Horatia's 'father,' Lady Hamilton was the only woman who *stood* in the position of mother to

the little girl. In the letter, written four days later at Canterbury, where the writer was staying with Dr. and Mrs. William Nelson, Horatia is mentioned by Lady Hamilton as 'our dearest Horatia,' and 'my dear girl.' Speaking of the child in this maternal style, the emotional writer declares 'her heart will not bear to be without' her darling, now that she has had her own Horatia for so considerable a time at Merton.

Lady Hamilton to Lord Nelson.

'Canterbury: October 8th, 1805.

'My dearest Life,

'We are just come from church, for I am so fond of the church-service, and the Cannons are so civil. We have every day a fine anthem for me. Yesterday Mr. Mrs. and Miss Harper, Mrs. Bridges, Marquess of Douglas and General Thornton and Mr. Hoker (?) the member dined with us. The Dr. gave a good dinner and Mariana dress'd the macroni and cury so as [it] went off [well]. Our Julia is very ill yet, but not brought to bed as she is only seven months. I do not mean to keep Julia after she gets over [ ]. I was obliged to send for Mariana down, and my mother can ill spare her. She gives me such an amiable account of our dearest Horatia. She now reeds very well and is learning her notes and french and italian; and my mother doats on her. The other day she said at table, "Mrs. Caduging, I wonder Julia did not run out of the church when she went to be married; for I should, seeing my squinting husband come in. For, my God, how ugly he is and how he looks cross-eyed. Why, as my Lady says, he looks 2 ways for Sunday." Now Julia's husband is the ugliest man you ever saw;—but how that little thing could observe him? But she is clever, is she not, Nelson? We go to-morrow for 2 days to Ramsgate to see our old friends. Poor Lady Dunmore, who is there, is in great affliction for the loss of her son, Captain John Murry. To-day we dine alone to eat up the scraps and drink tea with old Mrs. Percy. Charlotte hates Canterbury—"It is *so*

dull!"—so it is. My dear girl writes every day in Miss Conner's letter, and I am so pleased with her. My heart is broke being from her, but I have now had her so long at Merton, my heart will not bear to be without her. You will be even fonder of her, when you return. She says, "I love dear dear god-papa, but Mrs. Gibson told me he killed all the people, and I was affraid." Dearest angel, she is! Oh, Nelson! how I love her, but how I idolise you, my dearest husband of my heart! You are all in this world to your Emma. May God send you victory and home soon to your *Emma, Horatia and Paradise, Merton*! for when you are there it will be paradise! My own Nelson, may God prosper you, and preserve you for the sake of your affectionate

'EMMA.

[P.S.] 'I hope Sir Edward Perry has joined you by this time, but I now long to have letters from you. Everybody's full of Sir H. Calder coming home. Captain Staines called yesterday. He is gone to town as he wishes much to join you. Lord Douglas begd me to ask you if ever you met with Turkish tobaco, and if you did he wishes you would send him some. Write often; tell me how you are, how the sea agrees with you, weather it is a bad port to blockade, in short—the smallest trifle that concerns you is so very interesting to your *own faithfull Emma.*—My compliments to the Mr. Scotts and Mr. Ford. Poor Nancy recommends her brother to you. Nancy has nursed me in *many* an *illness night* and *day*, and you will love her for that. Tyson is going to buy a county seat and park for Mrs. Tyson near Woolwich. My compliments to Admiral Louis (?) God bless you my own Nelson.'

Address of letter:—'Viscount Nelson, Duke of Bronté, —to the care of Captain Keate, His M. Ship *Superb*, Portsmouth.' Post-mark:—'Free Oct. 9, 1805.'

Had these two letters come to Nelson's hands, they would doubtless have perished, like the hundreds of letters which he had received from Lady Hamilton, and after perusing them had committed

to the fire, lest they should divulge matters that he desired to withhold from the world's knowledge.

Recovering quickly from the violent grief into which she was plunged by the first announcement of Nelson's death, Lady Hamilton could almost enjoy the luxurious woe with which she regarded the spectacle of his pompous funeral on January 9th, 1806. The pomp would have been more soothing to her feelings and more agreeable to her sense of justice, had she been allowed to figure in the procession as chief mourner. But the solemnity which stirred the heart of a mighty nation was consolatory to the woman who, in a selfish and vain-glorious way, had loved the Admiral with passionate vehemence. Had she loved him in a loftier way, she would have been content with his noble provision for her future maintenance, instead of conceiving herself entitled to a part of the money, granted by the nation for the endowment of his family. It would be less difficult to think respectfully of her attachment to Nelson, had she been less clamorous for handsome payment in money for the services which she imagined herself to have rendered him.

It would also have been better for her reputation had she lived in retirement for a considerable period after his funeral, instead of returning immediately to the world and its pleasures. But Emma Hamilton, with her keen appetite for gaiety and good cheer, was not the woman to allow prudential considerations to interfere with her enjoyments. Living chiefly at No. 11, Clarges Street, where she kept a liberal table and open house almost from the day of her hero's inter-

ment, she usually passed the Sunday at Merton, where Mrs. Cadogan figured as the vigilant steward of her daughter's estate,—checking accounts, resisting the demands of extortionate tradesmen, begging reasonable and fair (though importunate) tradesmen to 'wait a little longer,' and superintending the repairs and improvements that were being pushed forward in and about the house. 'Let me know,' Mrs. Cadogan wrote to her daughter before the end of January, 1806, 'wether you have a copy of the will or not, as I understand the executors are to pay every expence for six months after the death. Pray write me word wether you have employ'd a law[y]er against Haslewood. Let me know in particular; for, if you have not, I will. I am well inform'd, if the measure [of] the land your house stands upon will not allow the pleasure-ground that is taken in, that you have a right to take in what part you like of the Wimbledon Estate. Write me every particular that [we] may not be taken unawares.' Something more than a fortnight later, the suspicious and combative Mrs. Cadogan wrote from Merton to her daughter at No. 11, Clarges Street, Piccadilly, this significant note:

Mrs. Cadogan to Lady Hamilton.

'Merton: 18th February, 1806.

'My dear Emma,

'I will not show them one bill or receipt; I will tell them you have locked up some . . . . I have receipts for thirteen hundred pounds, besides the last forty-two. Mr. Cribb advises me not to show them, till you have seen them on Saturday. I shall send Sarah with them, as Frances comes to town. I had a very canting letter from

Haslewood yesterday, saying the Earl and him was coming down to-day. God bless you, my dearest Emma.

'M. CADOGAN.

'P.S.—I will write and tell you all to-morrow, if it is too late for the post.'

When Mrs. Cadogan decided to withhold the receipts from Earl Nelson and Mr. Haslewood (the executors of Nelson's last will) Emma Hamilton had already made some steps towards her serious disagreement with the same executors on questions, touching 'the liabilities of the estate.' Whilst she was of opinion that the charges for certain repairs and improvements, done at Merton since Nelson's death, should fall on the Admiral's estate, Earl Nelson and his co-executor were no less strongly of opinion that the charges should be defrayed by the lady to whom Merton Place, with seventy acres of adjacent land, had been bequeathed. Differences of opinion had also arisen between the two executors and Lady Hamilton respecting the liability of the estate for all the current household expenses at Merton, since Nelson's death. There is no need to state the particulars of these matters of dispute. But to readers, who would take a judicial view of the subsequent discord between Emma Hamilton and Earl Nelson, it may appear noteworthy that warm words had passed between the executor and the woman of beauty on these questions of money, before the always fervid and emotional Emma charged him with over-reaching and cheating her, in respect to the so-called 8th codicil. Had things gone smoothly between Lady Hamilton and the executors on the

questions about 'repairs' and 'current expenses,' it is conceivable that she would not in a gust of anger have accused the Admiral's greatly maligned brother of keeping in his pocket the famous memorandum, in respect to which he had behaved with perfect openness and honesty.

On 26th April, 1806, Emma Hamilton celebrated the anniversary of her birthday with a dinner at her town-house, and together with congratulatory notes from friends of higher quality, received the following letters of good wishes from her mother and Sarah Reynolds :—

Mrs. Cadogan and Sarah Reynolds to Lady Hamilton, at No. 11, *Clarges Street, Piccadilly.*

'Merton, April 26th, [1806?]

'My dear Emma,

'I pray God send you many happy returns of this day. I have sent you a gown of Sarah Reynolds' making. If I had ten thousand pounds to send you this day, I should have been very happy. I have sent Mariann as I thought she might be of use to you to-day. I am all over with bricks and dust and stinking paint. Bring no body but your own family on Saturday. You shall have a Menestra Verde and one thing roasted. Mariann will tell you how miserable I have been this week. My dear Emma, I owe Mariann 4 months wages which is two guines. I had it not to give her, and she wants shoes and stockings. If you can, give Sarah Connor thirty shillings to pay her washer-woman, as she is indetted to her for three months' washing. I have got her washing down (*i.e.* done) here. You must send Mariann as soon as you can in the morning. God bless you, my ever dear Emma,

'M. Cadogan.'

Followed on the same sheet of paper by this letter,

'My ever dear Lady Hamilton,

'I wish you many happy returns of this day. I should have been very happy had I it in my power to have made you a small present on this day, but not haveing any thing but what my dear aunt and you has been so good as to give me, I wish it had been in my power. I should have been very happy. Believe me, dear Lady Hamilton, with gratitude and thank[s] for what you have done for me and my dear father and family.

'God bless you, dear Lady Hamilton,

'S. Reynolds.'

Sarah Reynolds was one of the poor relations, to whom Lady Hamilton had often given freely out of her abundance, when her account at the bank showed a better balance in her favour than it displayed in the April following Nelson's death. From passages of Mrs. Cadogan's epistle, it appears that the lady of quality who drove about town in a showy carriage and entertained her friends bravely in Clarges Street, whilst her old mother kept to her hard and dirty work at Merton Place, was far from 'flush of money' in the spring of 1806.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THEIR MAJESTIES OF THE FARTHER SICILY.

Massena and St. Cyr in Naples—Pacification of the Provinces—Atrocities of the Pacification—End of Fra Diavolo—Agostino Mosca's Attempt—Explosion in Saliceti's Palace—Victory of Maida—Its Fruitlessness—Surrender of Capri—Anglo-Sicilian Expeditions—Ferdinand's Resignation and Maria Caroline's Discontent—Desperate Measures—Suspicious Circumstances—Julia Clary and Caroline Buonaparte—Maria Caroline's Government of Sicily—Her Expenditure on Spies and secret Political Agents—Her Expenditure on Neapolitan Refugees—Her financial Distress—Mutiny of the Barons—Maria Caroline's Stroke of Apoplexy—Her partial Recovery—Her Differences with Lord Amherst—Castroni's Privateers—Murat's Preparations for the Invasion of Sicily—The 'not incredible Story'—Change of English Feeling towards Maria Caroline—Lord Valentia in Sicily—His Private Journal—Its Merits and Demerits—Its scandalous Stories—St. Clair and Afflitto—Lord Valentia's Account of 'the Favourites'—His shocking Mistake—A physical Impossibility.

1806—1811 A.D.

DISAPPOINTED of her desire for a battle to preserve Naples from the French, Maria Caroline sailed to Palermo in the middle of February, 1806, nursing schemes of war for the recovery of the capital. Before leaving the continent she had sent her sixteen thousand regular troops to the defiles of Campotanese. On arriving in Sicily she lost no time in despatching agents to rouse the Calabrians, as they had been

roused in '99, to fight for the King and his throne. On the other hand, Massena and St. Cyr, after establishing order in the capital, were quick in sending strong detachments of their overwhelming host to those parts of the country, that were most likely to offer stout and dangerous resistance to Napoleon's authority. In the provinces, that once more became theatres of warfare, there was a repetition of the scenes of carnage and ferocious cruelty that had distinguished the civil conflict of '99.

Even stronger language must be used to describe the measures, by which the French pacified the towns and districts that gave them most trouble. At the present date, dispassionate writers would forbear to call attention to the most atrocious incidents of those measures, had certain French historians been less quick to charge Nelson with frigid cruelty, and less hypocritical in commending Napoleon's captains for their humanity and beneficence to the people of Southern Italy. It was not enough for these humane officers to give towns up to pillage, and in the first heat of victory to kill prisoners-of-war, whose only offence was that they had fought bravely for the King to whom they owed fealty. When the struggle was over, and the passions of conflict had subsided, these soldiers of civilization, acting as military commissioners, could sentence wretched people to death for words and acts of treason against their lord and sovereign, King Joseph Buonaparte, on the evidence of spies and informers. Most of these unhappy persons died by the gun, the hatchet, or the rope. Some died by other instruments. 'The modes of punishment

were various, new, and terrific,' says Colletta, who gives a few examples of the new and terrific punishments. At Monteleone, one of the sufferers by military order was suspended alive from a wall, and torn to death by a mob of savages, who sought to conciliate their conquerors by executing a monstrous sentence. At Lagonegro, an important town of the Basilicata, General Colletta himself saw a man impaled, in accordance with eastern usage, at the command of a French colonel, who was just then pacifying a troublesome district. These new and terrific punishments, Colletta is careful to observe, were not administered at the order of the government. But, none the less for being irregular and grotesque abuses of authority, they were employed for the pacification of the royalist districts. The decrees of the tribunals were executed with less irregularity in the capital, whose market-place became a school for teaching the populace that King Joseph (and, something later, King Joachim) could be no less rigorous than King Ferdinand towards culprits convicted of conspiring against his government. It is indisputable that both of the Napoleonian Kings of Naples employed spies and informers for the discovery of treason and the conviction of traitors, no less habitually than Maria Caroline employed them for the same ends. Yet French historians, who see nothing or little to condemn in the penal methods of the two kings, speak with abhorrence of the Queen's cruelty in using the same instruments of police.

It has been charged against Maria Caroline that,

in her passionate eagerness to recover Naples, she did not hesitate, in 1806, to conspire with malefactors, and could even instigate them to aid her in ways, forbidden by the rules of honest warfare; and it must be admitted even by those who take the most favourable view of her career, that she suffers in historic dignity and honour from three affairs of crime, (1) Fra Diavolo's last expedition, (2) Agostino Mosca's design to assassinate King Joseph, and (3) Viscardi's attempt on the life of Saliceti, the same king's minister of police.

When Fra Diavolo (whilom brigand, and in his last years a colonel in the service of Their Sicilian Majesties) was taken prisoner at Baronisi, letters purporting to have come to him from Sidney Smith and Maria Caroline were found upon his person. But the evidence of his commission from the Queen comprised matters more conclusive than a few papers, which might have been forged and placed in the captive's pocket by an officer of Joseph Buonaparte's secret police. On landing at Sperlonga some three months earlier, Michele Pezza, *alias* Fra Diavolo, had come straight from Sicily. Moreover, he was accompanied by a band of three hundred men, who had been liberated from the galleys on condition that they would accept him as their chieftain, and serve him loyally. Thus furnished with men who had been relieved of their chains, and equipped for war by royal order, Fra Diavolo was despatched from Sicily to rouse the district of his birth and earliest exploits. All that can be urged in excuse of the Queen's confidential relations

with Michele Pezza has been urged in former chapters. Her fool-hardiness in sending him on such a mission with three hundred galley-slaves admits of no palliation. It shows how much she had lost of the sagacity and prudence, that distinguished her in a distant and better time.

Her last commission to Michele Pezza was a wicked folly. To designate her apparent complicity in Agostino Mosca's enterprise, one must use a harsher word. On the capture of this desperado, charged with lying in wait to assassinate King Joseph, there were found on his person a letter, in which Maria Caroline moved him, in covert language, to commit the crime, and another letter, in which the Marchioness of Tranfo, a lady in Her Majesty's confidence, urged him in less ambiguous terms to take Joseph's life. Moreover, the culprit wore on his right arm a bracelet of hair and gold, which he alleged himself to have received from the hand of the Prince of Canosa as a gift from the Queen, and an earnest of adequate reward, should he kill the King. In the Queen's behalf, it may, of course, be urged that she might have written the criminatory letter without being precisely cognizant of the nature of Mosca's enterprise. The authenticity of the letter might even be questioned. But whatever may be done to explain away the darkest circumstances of the case, it must remain that Mosca designed to assassinate the new King of Naples, and that immediately before his attempt to do so he was in communication with persons about the Queen, and had reason to think his purpose had her approval.

Were there nothing but old Viscardi's statements to connect her with the explosion which, in the middle of a certain night of January, 1807, wrecked twenty-two rooms of Saliceti's palace, and nearly swept the minister from this life, one might fairly decline to think Maria Caroline an accomplice in the dastardly business. Under examination, the faint-hearted conspirator, who, to prolong his own wretched existence by a few shameful years, put the rope round his son's neck, was of course capable of saying anything to conciliate his questioners. But, like Mosca's abortive project for assassinating Joseph Buonaparte, the plot for slaying the minister of police with an infernal machine was hatched at Palermo by conspirators who enjoyed Canosa's patronage. The prince may have withheld from Maria Caroline the details of the arrangement for doing away with the minister of police, whose energy and intelligence were hurtful to her interests in Naples. But it is difficult to conceive that the project first came to Maria Caroline's cognizance through the report of its miscarriage.

Ready to dare much and do strange things against the enemy, who had for a second time driven her from the continent to the island, Maria Caroline was slow to believe that the French would hold Naples for any considerable time. And in July, 1806, she had reason to be hopeful for a speedy recovery of Naples, when she received the glad tidings of General Stuart's brilliant victory over General Reynier. With only four thousand seven hundred and ninety-five men, the great majority of whom had never before been in action, the English general had beaten over

six* thousand of the best soldiers of France on the plains of Maida. The victory had been won with a trifling loss to the victors (forty-five men killed, and two hundred and eighty-two wounded), when Lieutenant-Colonel Ross, who had landed from Messina on the same day, brought the 20th Regiment into action just in time to follow the flying French, and drive them from the field in bloody rout. In killed and wounded the French, with their Swiss contingent, lost four thousand men. The success, that stirred Great Britain with joyful pride, and lives still on the tongues of men as one of the brilliant affairs of modern warfare, may well have elated Maria Caroline, who could still hope that war would eventually repay her for all she had lost by warlike enterprise. At length fortune had turned in her favour. Her Calabrians, the peasants of all the Neapolitan provinces, which the Corsican braggart had presumed to give to his feeble brother, would fight like heroes at the bidding of allies, who could rout thus decisively a French army so greatly superior to them in number. The enemy would for the future have a wholesome fear of British bayonets.

No blame to General Stuart that so little good came to Maria Caroline's cause from his brilliant victory. It was not the policy of Great Britain to win glory—not even such glory as came to her at Maida—by fighting big battles with France on the Italian peninsula. For the present it was enough for

* Colletta puts the French force at *six* thousand, but by other authorities the French and Swiss are said to have numbered *seven* thousand.

her to maintain their Sicilian Majesties in secure enjoyment of the island. Stuart did his best to impress on the Calabrians that he had given them a good opportunity for rising, and hoped they would turn the opportunity to good account. Traversing the south of Calabria, he called on the peasantry to fight for their king, and threw garrisons into the chief strongholds of the country. But fear restrained the people from flocking to the general's standard. And small blame to the dull mountaineers that they were more strongly impressed by French cruelty than by British gallantry. For the moment their devotion to Ferdinand was overborne by their dread of Joseph's vengeance. After doing all he was authorized to accomplish for Ferdinand's cause in Calabria, the brave Stuart returned with his army to Sicily; and, before the end of the year, the French were back again in the province out of which they had been so recently driven by British arms.

The fruitlessness of Stuart's victory was a cruel disappointment to Maria Caroline, who now fell a prey to the violent and bitter grief that is so apt to demoralize the sufferer. One may not speak of her sharp and poisonous sorrow as though it justified her in conniving at assassination. But if she countenanced Mosca's crime and sanctioned the attempt on Saliceti's life as she seems to have done, it is a matter for regretful pity rather than for the severest expressions of abhorrence, that in her rage and despair she conceived herself at liberty to use vile agents and shameful means for recovering to her husband the

crown and to her children the royal patrimony that had been wrested from them by force.

Maria Caroline's grief for the fruitlessness of Maida would have been less hurtful to her nature had it been followed at no long intervals by incidents calculated to revive her hope of recovering Naples. But nothing occurred during 1807 to sustain the hope, or even to indicate that the guardians of her husband's remaining kingdom would soon attempt to satisfy her strongest desire. In the autumn of 1808 her position on the Neapolitan coast was weakened and lowered by Colonel Lowe's surrender of Capri. Scarcely escaping the shame of defeat, the Anglo-Sicilian expeditions of 1809 came to nothing before the end of autumn; and at the close of the following year Joachim Murat strengthened himself in the region of his dominions, where his authority had hitherto been weakest, by exterminating the Calabrian bands that in '99 had contributed so largely to Ruffo's earlier successes. But ere Murat cleared Calabria of the brigands, Maria Caroline had survived her enthusiasm for the English, and was perhaps scheming to recover Naples without their assistance.

Retirement in Sicily, where they were guarded by English ships and sustained by English money, was far less vexatious to Ferdinand than to Maria Caroline. Tranquilly confident of returning to Naples in the course of years, he escaped the bitter disappointment that preyed on Maria Caroline's heart, by forbearing to hope for a speedy restoration to his continental throne. Reposing on the easy temper

that overlay the dormant ferocity of his inconsistent nature, he was less inclined to upbraid Fortune for her unkindness than to thank her for leaving him so much to enjoy. To the new acquaintances who came about him at Palermo he seemed an embodiment of good humour, as he gabbled to them of his amusements, in the high treble notes, that never characterized his wrathful utterances. Whilst he regarded the Queen with contemptuous aversion, Lord Valentia admired the King's 'perfect resignation to his misfortunes and his implicit confidence that the Almighty would do what was best for his creatures.' The Queen, for whose failings the English diplomatist had no pity, was a woman, worn and fretted almost to madness by countless cares. The King, whom the same diplomatist could commend for habitual amiability and pious fortitude, was a man who passed his nights in easy slumber and his days in absorbing amusements. Sick of 'affairs,' for which he had discovered his inaptitude, Ferdinand lived the life of a keen sportsman, a luxurious epicure and a careless country gentleman, whilst his allies guarded him from the French, and his Queen mismanaged the affairs of his little kingdom. No wonder that he was happy and that she was miserable.

To Maria Caroline the retirement in Sicily, which her husband could almost enjoy, was a shameful punishment. Never more ambitious of power, than in the days when she was indebted to England for the residue of her queenly estate, and Sicily was little more than a British garrison, she suffered cruelly from the failure of her efforts to recover her greater

kingdom. To the proud woman, banishment from Naples was dynastic effacement. In '99 she had written bitterly of her 'inutilité;' she felt the force of the word more acutely, now that she figured to the continental courts as nothing more considerable than a rash gamester, who had courted defeat and won it for herself, her husband and her children by her madness in daring to contend with Napoleon, after he had warned her in the hearing of all Europe that nothing short of absolute ruin would ensue to her and her offspring, if she persisted in her passionate hostility to his interests.

Writhing under the contemptuous censure of the continental courts, Maria Caroline smarted also from the minor consequences of the Corsican's decree. She winced with sudden and sharp pain, and her worn and furrowed face flushed crimson, when she thought how Joseph Buonaparte's wife, the woman Julia Clary, daughter of an inferior Marseilles merchant, was figuring as Queen at Naples and Caserta. The names of the Duchess of Cassano, the Marchioness del Gallo and the Princess Doria Avellino were entered in clear characters on the tablets of Maria Caroline's memory, as the names of three noble Neapolitan ladies, who were the quickest of all the women of the vile Neapolitan nobility to kneel at Julia Clary's feet. On hearing how these three women had attended their Queen, Julia Clary, on her journey to France, when Joseph Buonaparte set out for Spain, Maria Caroline took a note of the fact, and hoped that even yet time's whirligig would enable her to reward the duchess and the marchioness and the

princess for their devotion to Madame Buonaparte.

Maria Caroline was none the happier for Julia Clary's withdrawal from Naples, when Julia's successor had taken possession of the Palazzo Reale and the Caserta Palace, and set the courtiers talking about her elegant figure and singular beauty, her noble features and queenly name. It is conceivable that his sister's Christian name was one of the several considerations, which determined Napoleon to send his brother-in-law Murat to Naples. The man of fate, who knew so much of the meaner passions of human nature, and hated Maria Caroline with ignoble hatred, must have known that his victim at Palermo would squirm with fury, on learning that her former place in Southern Italy would soon be filled by another Caroline, whose personal charms would cause her to be styled 'the beautiful Caroline of Naples.'

In her earlier time, ere her nerves had been shaken by enormous calamities, Maria Caroline was capable of veiling her sorrows with a show of gladness and covering her exultation with an air of cold serenity. But in 1808, the failing Queen had ceased to be mistress of her emotions, and could not affect a proud indifference to the name and personality of the Corsican gentlewoman, who had married 'the best cavalry-officer of Europe.' In giving audience to new arrivals from Naples, she seldom failed to betray an unqueenly and pathetic hunger for disparaging tattle about her rival; and the people at Naples, with whom she maintained clandestine correspondence by means of Castroni's ill-reputed privateers, soon discovered that to please the Queen in exile they must season

their letters with piquant tales of Caroline Murat's doings.

At this period of keen vexations and growing troubles, Maria Caroline was cheered by a domestic incident, that for a brief while caused her lively gratification. Born in 1782, the Princess Marie-Amélie had survived by several years the age at which princesses of her line were wont to marry, when Louis Philippe of Orleans, who, in 1830, rose to be King of the French, made the voyage from Malta to Sicily, and landed at Messina in 1808. Invited to Palermo—where he was cordially welcomed by Maria Caroline—the exiled Duke of Orleans soon regarded Marie-Amélie with feelings that moved him to seek her in marriage. The duke's suit was accepted, but untoward circumstances delayed the wedding for more than a year, during which time the French prince accompanied the Sicilian Prince Leopold to Spain, and re-visited England, before he returned to Palermo for the celebration of his marriage with the princess, who, after playing the part of Queen of the French, to the approval even of her husband's political enemies, passed her closing years in England, where she received from every class of English society the sympathy due to her troubles and the homage due to her virtues. Celebrated in November, 1809, the marriage of Louis Philippe and Marie-Amélie proved a singularly felicitous union. But to poor Maria Caroline, ever so solicitous for the matrimonial establishment of her daughters, the auspicious alliance soon became more fruitful of vexation than of felicity; for at an early date of the political

conflict, which resulted in her deposition and extrusion from Sicily, the Queen had the mortification of seeing the Duke of Orleans withdraw from her cause, and take part with the mutinous barons and overbearing England.

Ruling at Palermo just as she had ruled at Naples, and just as Joseph Buonaparte and Joachim Murat ruled the inhabitants of the last-named capital, Maria Caroline maintained a strong staff of spies for the discovery of plots and their hatchers. On her spies and other private agents—*i.e.*, on persons of both sexes whom she employed either as spies, or as secret diplomatic envoys—Her Majesty is said to have spent about £56,575 per annum during the four years following her arrival at Palermo in 1806. During the same period she is said to have spent about £226,300 a-year on the necessitous Neapolitans, who either accompanied the royal family in their flight from Naples to Palermo, or came in later time from the continent to the insular capital, in the character of exiles and sufferers for her cause. Though they comprised a small minority of rascals, whose claims to sympathy were worse than equivocal, these refugees were for the most part honest gentlefolk and zealous Bourbornists, who had fled to Sicily for purely political reasons, and would there have fallen into abject destitution, had not the Queen granted them small pensions. For relieving the equally unfortunate and deserving petitioners for relief, Her Majesty is to be commended rather than blamed, though she may have aided some of them too liberally, and have accorded protection to a few miscreants,

whom she should have dismissed from the island. Still, the sums she spent on private agents and refugees were greatly out of proportion to her means, and they were items of her expenditure, that had never figured in the considerations and calculations, which determined the English government to allow Their Sicilian Majesties a yearly subsidy of £300,000, (rising in course of time to £400,000), so that they should be in a position to live with dignity and at the same time maintain an efficient army in their little kingdom.

As she spent on her secret service a sum not far short of the British subsidy, whilst omitting to exercise due economy in the arrangements of the palace, it is not surprising that Maria Caroline found herself in urgent pecuniary difficulties towards the close of 1809, when she had squandered on bootless expeditions and other futile efforts, for the recovery of her husband's continental dominions, the large amount of specie which had been transported from Naples to Sicily, about the time of her withdrawal to the island. To escape from these difficulties, she caused Ferdinand in 1810 to convoke the Sicilian parliament, in order that, after deliberating on the financial position of the country, it should provide a sufficient revenue for the government. The appeal to the loyalty of the parliament was unsuccessful; for, though the clergy and commons were disposed to vote in accordance with the Queen's wishes, the barons were moved by various considerations to oppose the ministers of the crown. Led by Prince Belmonte, the bitter personal enemy of the minister

De Medici, the barons, whilst voting a few grants of money in augmentation of the revenue arising from the 'donatives,' stoutly refused to vote for taxes, that would at least for a time have relieved the Queen from financial distress, even though they would soon have proved insufficient for her requirements.

On learning how the barons had dealt with De Medici's proposals, Maria Caroline showed her displeasure with characteristic vehemence. She was furious. It was not a single outbreak of such fury as exhausts itself in a few hours and is followed by the composure of resignation, but a storm of anger, that, lasting for several days, subsided for an hour, only to gather force for a fiercer outbreak. When the storm had died away, and the sufferer had returned to her ordinary demeanour, close observers saw upon her pallid countenance a new air of distress. They were right in thinking that though outwardly calm she was enduring secret anguish, and that in surviving the violence of her wrath she had not survived all the physical consequences of her recent defeat. The look of blank distress was even more alarming than the previous display of turbulent emotion. Instead of dying away, this air of trouble grew more manifest up to the moment of the seizure, which wrecked her powers of mind and body without extinguishing them utterly, and marks the point of her personal story, where the failing Queen became a broken woman,—so shattered and half demented as to be at times scarcely responsible for her actions.

On an early day of July, 1810, when the people of

Palermo were pushing forward their preparations for the five-days' *fête* of St. Rosalie, a rumour ran through the city that Maria Caroline had been struck with paralysis and was lying at the palace, unconscious and on the point of death. It shows how unpopular the Queen had become in Palermo, where all the misfortunes of the state were attributed to her malign influence, and how strongly the general sympathy went with the barons, who enjoyed credit for having thwarted Her Majesty from patriotic motives, that the report of her illness and extreme danger caused the populace to run to and fro with undisguised satisfaction. Even in the palace, whither she hastened to make inquiries for the sufferer, Lady Amherst (our ambassador's wife) saw no sign of grief. Regarding the Queen as already dead, the courtiers, who had most reason to think tenderly of her, were congratulating themselves on an event, that might turn to their advantage by disposing the barons to vote money for the King, and by making the Sicilians less suspicious of the English. 'The poor Sicilians,' Madame Circello said to Lady Amherst, 'have been tormented long enough, and if they were now released from their torment, things would go on better, for without her the King could be easily managed' (*vide*, Lord Valentia's 'Journal').

But the fickle courtiers and the ignorant populace were too quick to rejoice. After lying unconscious for twenty-four hours the Queen regained her senses; and Lady Amherst had the amusement of observing the consequent alarm of the Sicilian courtiers, who were fearful that their expressions of delight at the

prospect of Her Majesty's death would come to her knowledge. So far as the worn and shattered woman could recover from so severe a blow, Maria Caroline slowly recovered from this seizure of apoplexy, which should be borne in mind by those readers, who would take a fair view of the errors and follies of her closing years. Had she been a gentlewoman of a private station and ordinary circumstances, Maria Caroline would henceforth have been watched and guarded tenderly by her nearest kindred, who would have preserved her infirmities from the world's notice and conciliated her confidence with affectionate ministrations. But one of the hard requirements of her unrelenting fate was that she should continue to rule a people, when she could no longer rule herself.

Three months after the apoplectic seizure, Maria Caroline came to a rupture with Lord Amherst. To increase her insufficient revenue Her Majesty had made a curious and unseemly compact with one of her subordinate ministers, a Neapolitan named Castroni, which almost justified Lord Valentia in describing the Queen and her chief spy 'as partners in a system of privateering that sometimes verged very close on piracy.' Besides being Her Majesty's chief commissioner for spies, and her secret minister of justice for Palermo, Castroni was owner of a small fleet of about thirty privateers, with which he harrassed the mercantile marine of Their Sicilian Majesties' enemies. Whilst authorizing Castroni by Ferdinand's letters of marque to prey upon hostile shipping, the Queen stipulated that she should receive

a proportion of the value of every prize made by his privateers. It was not the Queen's fault that Castroni's privateers now and then took possession of vessels, that on being brought into port were found by inquisition to be unlawful prizes. Such accidents are unavoidable in privateering. But it was alike unfortunate for Castroni and the Queen that one of his privateers captured on the open sea a vessel entitled to fly the English colours. It was especially unfortunate for the Queen's relations with the ally, under whose protection she had been living for more than four years, that difficulties were raised to the enlargement of this false prize, and that Her Majesty's secret pecuniary interest in Castroni's captures came to light in the negociations for the restitution of this wrongfully-taken vessel. The affair was none the less awkward because it had been preceded by similar misadventures. Rumour probably exaggerated the number of these 'mistakes,' but in referring to the incident which resulted in Maria Caroline's 'quarrel' with the English ambassador, Lord Valentia was, no doubt, justified in speaking of 'the English vessels' which 'had been brought in and recovered with difficulty,' because 'Her Majesty was a participator in the plunder.'

In the interval between the Queen's apoplectic fit and her quarrel with Lord Amherst, the Sicilians of the island and their English allies were occupied with more important and stirring incidents than a squabble about Castroni's wrongful seizure of a few trading vessels. The summer and autumn of 1810 witnessed Joachim Murat's preparations for the invasion of

Sicily, and the encampment of the host that would have handled the invaders roughly, had not Murat's ardour been overborne by Grenier's authority. On the Calabrian side of the Straits of Messina, from Scilla to Reggio, the King of Naples gathered an army of sixteen thousand men, with a sufficient fleet for transporting them to the island, where an English army held the shore from Messina to the Torre di Faro. Behind the heights held by the English, another line of heights was occupied by the Sicilian army. Whilst the allies on the peninsula numbered no more than sixteen thousand men, the allied armies on the other side of the Faro numbered no less than twenty-two thousand. Thus encamped on the opposite heights at the narrowest point of the Faro, Murat's soldiers could on a still night hear the baying of the watch-dogs in the English camp.

Though he did not return to Naples without throwing a small body of sixteen hundred Neapolitans on the opposite coast, so as to demonstrate how easily the landing of a larger expedition could be effected, King Joachim of Naples was denied the excitement and glory of the invasion, to which he had been incited by his wife and encouraged by Napoleon. Murat could do no more in vindication of his military judgment, as General Grenier, who commanded the French troops, refused to cross the water. That Grenier declined to co-operate in the enterprise, whose practicability was put beyond question by the experimental landing of the sixteen hundred Neapolitans, accords with the story which General Colletta rated as 'not incredible.'

The not incredible story was that, in her despair of recovering Naples by England's aid and the sympathy of the Neapolitans, and in her irritation against the English, whom she by this time suspected of a design to hold Sicily as well as Malta in perpetuity, and regarded less as her protectors than her crafty despoilers, Maria Caroline conceived the wild project of regaining her continental realm by the favour of Napoleon, whose recent Austrian marriage had made him her great-nephew and grand-son by affinity. It was rumoured that to conciliate her ancient enemy, and to show him that it was not his interest to keep her in dynastic depression, she directed one of her secret diplomatic agents to submit to the French emperor proposals for a compact, by which she should bind herself to break with England and use her army to drive the English from Sicily, if he would undertake to reinstate her husband in Naples. It is admitted by Colletta that this amazing scheme was neither published nor put in writing. But, according to the not incredible story, Napoleon entertained the proposals respectfully, and accepted them as the basis of a verbal compact, by which he promised to send a French force to her assistance, should she fail to overpower the English army with her own troops. In execution of this engagement Napoleon is said to have dispatched Grenier to Calabria, with orders to watch the course of events on the other side of the Faro, and carry his men promptly into Sicily, should the Queen ask him to do so, but to refrain from crossing the straits, should she be silent and the course of events be equally uninviting. In making this com-

pact, if he made it, Napoleon of course had no intention of restoring the Bourbons to Naples, but was only playing with Maria Caroline, in the hope that her folly might afford him a favourable opportunity for wresting Sicily from the English in his own interest. On the other hand, if the compact was made, it shows to what a state of fatuity Maria Caroline had fallen shortly before apoplexy struck her to the ground.

In the ministerial and official circles of London society, the intelligence of Maria Caroline's financial embarrassments, her conflict with the Sicilian barons, her frequent discourtesies to Lord Amherst, her change of feeling for England, and her other recent perversities, had well-nigh extinguished compassion for her troubles, when Lord Valentia, on the 19th of October, 1810, sailed for the Mediterranean, to gather information about Gibraltar, Malta, and Sicily, that might be serviceable to ministers responsible for the welfare of our Mediterranean interests. At the close of the next October, the diplomatic viscount was back in England, with the 'Private Journal of the Affairs of Sicily,' in which he had recorded his observations and gleanings of data about Sicily.

Searchers of this 'Private Journal' will find it none the less entertaining because it is here and there seasoned with piquant and slightly scandalous gossip touching Sicilian and other notabilities. But students should not peruse the work with unqualified confidence in its accuracy. Besides spelling familiar words in ways forbidden by the dictionaries and intolerable to the Civil Service examiners, Lord Valentia now

and then went wildly wrong in his arithmetical calculations. He was also on more than a few occasions misled by insufficient informants. On discovering himself to have been thus misled on any point, he was careful to correct the erroneous statement of his record with notes of 'peccavi.' But some of his mistakes remain without correction. Moreover, after the wont of emotional observers even when they wish to be impartial, he was a warm partisan from the first to the last day of his seven months' sojourn in Sicily. In excuse for his one-sidedness it may, however, be urged that he went cordially with the barons, who, without being such patriots as they imagined themselves, were for the most part in the right in their quarrel with the Queen.

In universal disorder before Lord Valentia's arrival, Sicilian affairs went to further derangement during his stay in the island. So long as the barons persisted in refusing supplies, it mattered not what minister held office; for no minister could relieve the government of its embarrassments, and reform the departments, when the revenue barely sufficed to pay the Queen's 'secret service,' maintain the refugees, and meet the current expenses of the royal establishments. A second parliament having proved no more compliant than the previous assembly on questions of supply, the Queen only whipped the barons to fiercer anger by causing Ferdinand to issue edicts for raising money by taxation without the authority of the parliament. The barons remonstrated against the edicts; and when Ferdinand, acting at Her Majesty's direction, answered the re-

monstrance, by arresting the five leaders of the baronial party (the Princes of Belmonte, Aci, Villa Mora and Villa Franca, and the Duke of Anjou) matters were moving fast to a civil war, that would give Napoleon an opportunity of driving the English from the island. During this time of conflict and confusion, the Queen's troops were asking vainly for arrears of pay, and, in their discontent, were (to use Lord Valentia's expression) 'at the command of the first purchaser.'

After the wont of English tourists, whether they made his acquaintance at Naples or Palermo, at Caserta or Favorita, Lord Valentia thought somewhat too favourably of Ferdinand, who was 'considered by everyone as an honest, well-meaning man.' That he tried to judge the Queen fairly appears from the fact that he acquitted her of designing to put herself at the mercy of France, though Sir John Stuart held a strong opinion that she was intriguing with Napoleon. To Her Majesty's credit, he recorded that she 'was very abstemious at meals, and took very little wine.' The diplomatist's journal also gives the reader a pathetic view of the broken and miserable queen, weeping over her troubles and wishing 'that she could change her crown and its thorns for the contentment of mind possessed by the nurse of her grandson, the Duke of Chartres.'

But the Viscount's picture of Maria Theresa's daughter is, upon the whole, painfully harsh and even revolting. He might have recorded that, in her sixtieth year, she had wholly survived her beauty, without writing her down as 'a withered hag of

sixty, indulging in promiscuous debauchery, drunk with opium, and stained with the blood of her subjects.' Had he not mistaken for honest historians the foul libellers who had for years been charging her with vices of which she was wholly innocent, and with cruelties she never perpetrated, the English nobleman could not have written, even in a private journal, so coarsely of a queen who was, in her heyday, the loveliest woman of Europe. But one cannot be otherwise than grateful to Lord Valentia for calling attention, albeit so offensively, to the fact of the Queen's baneful habit of taking opium, as the fact strengthens the disproof of a far more shocking accusation which he prefers against her honour. As she had long suffered from acute neuralgia, the Queen may be pardoned for mitigating the pangs of a cruel malady with the medicine, which she took openly, because she took it without any sense of shame. When Lord Valentia was at Palermo, Maria Caroline's daily allowance of opium was *six* grains. She must therefore have taken the drug for some time. But the opium-eater who takes no more than six grains for a daily dose is still only in an early stage of a pernicious habit; and it is neither generous nor barely just to apply the term 'drunkard' to a sick woman, because she takes opium for the alleviation of bodily torture.

Condemning thus harshly the Queen's habit of taking opium, Lord Valentia wrote in the same unfeeling manner of her frequent 'fits of passion that amounted to madness, so that even her attendants were afraid of her,' though such visitations of fury in

an aged and shattered woman, still labouring under the effects of a stroke of apoplexy, should surely be regarded with compassion as resulting from severe physical distress, rather than with censorious repugnance, as signs of moral depravation.

It shows how ill-qualified Lord Valentia was to take a fair view of Maria Caroline's story, that he could speak of her as a woman who, in the happiest and least discreditable term of her queenly career, had 'probably limited her vices to the indulgence of her personal passions, wished to make others as happy as she fancied herself, and would have considered the person frantic,' who should have warned her of the depth of degradation to which her vicious propensities were likely to bring her. It shows how Maria Caroline's beneficent exertions for the welfare of her subjects, from the hour of her marriage till the outbreak of the French revolution, had been driven from human memory by the inventions of her slanderers, that the English nobleman could write in this strain of the Queen, who in the brightest season of her existence was no less virtuous than beautiful.

But Lord Valentia's most shocking and lamentable mistake respecting Maria Caroline remains to be noticed.

Like other European queens and great princesses, Maria Caroline found it convenient to have about her a gentleman-in-attendance, who without being a royal messenger, or a confidential secretary, or an equerry, or a comptroller of the household, or a master of ceremonies, may be said to have served her by turns in each of these various capacities. His honourable

office was no sinecure. An intermediary between his mistress and the officers of her household, he saw that her commands were executed with punctuality and exactness. Attending her in public, he provided for her comfort during her frequent journeys. It devolved upon him to execute countless commissions in respect to matters which she would have managed for herself, had she been a private gentlewoman. Sometimes these commissions were more than ordinarily delicate and secret. For example, when young Captain Hoste received the Queen's present of a diamond-ring at a moment that forbade her to proclaim openly her delight at Nelson's victory, he took the gift from the hand of Her Majesty's confidential gentleman-in-attendance, who informed the English sailor that Maria Caroline wished him for the present to be silent respecting her gift and its significance.

The gentlemen who succeeded one another in this courtly and confidential office, were not invariably officers of the guard; but the two cavaliers-in-waiting, who appear most often in the memoirs touching Maria Caroline and her court, were officers of that corps, and in reference to the favour shown to them by Her Majesty, each of them was sometimes spoken of as 'the favourite' of the guard. Lieutenant-Colonel St. Clair (the Frenchman who is styled Marquis St. Clair by Lord Valentia) was a captain of Ferdinand's guard; and the same rank was held in the same regiment by Signor Afflitto, who became favourite gentleman-in-attendance when St. Clair had gone with Prince Leopold to Spain and Gibraltar in

1808. Neither of these cavaliers was remarkable for personal attractiveness. Whilst Afflitto was a plain young man, St. Clair was disfigured by small-pox. Both were men of gentlemanly bearing. Thinking the worst of St. Clair's secret intercourse with Her Majesty, Lord Valentia allows that he 'conducted himself with great propriety.' Thinking as ill of Afflitto's relation to the Queen, Lord Valentia bears testimony that the younger captain of the guard forbore to interfere in politics, and though something of a puppy gave himself no airs. Little is known of Afflitto's mental endowments; but St. Clair was a man of considerable capacity. Generally regarded as having great influence over his mistress, he was suspected of exercising it to the disadvantage of the English, and whilst serving her in the capacity of first gentleman-in-waiting, he was also 'a kind of tutor to Prince Leopold.'

In a country that tolerated the evils of the cicisbeat, and in a court where a grand dame's *cavalière servente* was too often her paramour, the Queen's relation to her successive cavaliers-in-waiting gave rise to unedifying conjectures and much malicious gossip. Delighting in scandal, the Sicilian courtiers spread tales about the unpopular Queen, that were whispered to her discredit at the foreign embassies. Referring testily to St. Clair's influence over Her Majesty, Mr. Elliot wrote from Naples to Nelson in the summer of 1804, 'She is in many respects so completely biassed in her attachments by the *sad favourite* of the day, that her heart and understanding are equally the dupe of this weakness.' But there is

no need to gather together the numerous allusions to 'this weakness,' that may be found in private letters and published memoirs, in order to demonstrate that the Queen suffered in the esteem of English diplomatists from gossip, emanating from the coteries of her own malcontent subjects. In 1810 and 1811 the Sicilian barons took the most unfavourable view of her confidential intercourse with her 'sad favourites of the day.' It is therefore no matter for surprise that Lord Valentia (the cordial partisan of the Queen's fiercest political enemies, and a stranger to the Sicilian Court, whose information about the Queen came to him from persons with whom she was at war) wrote in his private journal:

'The present official favourite is the Marquis Saint Clair, a captain of the King's guard, Brigadier of the Army of Reserve, and a kind of tutor to Prince Leopold. He has been considered as having great influence over the mind of the Queen, and to his advice have been attributed the many ungracious acts of Her Majesty towards the English . . . . At present he' (*i.e.* St. Clair), 'has been considerably thrown into the back-ground by a court-intrigue. During his absence with Prince Leopold at Gibraltar, it was contrived that a young officer of the guard named Afflitto should be thrown in the way of the Queen. She was pleased with his appearance and [he] succeeded St. Clair in her favour,—an event that was made as public here as it would have been in Russia. He has been loaded with jewels, watches and trinkets, and receives an allowance of 50 ounces a-month for his pocket-money. He is gentlemanly but not handsome, and except a little puppyism gives himself no airs. The very people, however, who intrigued to place him [in] favour, are now extremely jealous and would remove him if they could. The Queen is still so much attached [to him] that it is well for these people Afflitto does not wish to interfere in politics; he would otherwise overset them and their intrigues.'

This marvellous piece of court-scandal is none the less marvellous, because Lord Valentia avers in the same paragraph that St. Clair still remained 'the present official favourite,' and conducted himself with great propriety in the office. Readers are thus informed that Maria Caroline's discreditable intimacy with Afflitto was continued after St. Clair had returned to his courtly post. The monstrous scandal was built upon the simple fact that, on St. Clair's departure from Palermo with Prince Leopold, the Queen required another person to discharge the ordinary duties of the absent gentleman-in-waiting, and appointed Afflitto to act as St. Clair's substitute during his absence. On his return with his royal pupil, St. Clair resumed his place near Her Majesty's person.

That the Queen's intercourse with the interim-holder of St. Clair's post was wholly pure of the evil suggested by the diplomatic journalist is proved by Lord Valentia himself, who speaks precisely of the broken state of Maria Caroline's health, her recent stroke of apoplexy, and her daily consumption of six grains of opium, the surest and most efficacious of all anaphrodisiacs.

The offspring of ancestors whose ages indicated that she would probably die before the middle of her seventh decade, Maria Caroline, in her sixtieth year, was nearing the age at which her famous mother died from general failure of her powers, rather than from the disease which was the immediate cause of her death. From her childhood a delicate creature, she had married in her sixteenth year and given birth to numerous children,—facts distinctly unfavourable

to the constitution of a woman, so wanting in physical robustness. Often prostrated by severe illness in earlier time, she had during the latter half of her existence suffered from repeated assaults of malarial fever. For twenty years she had been the prey of poignant sorrows, embittering mortifications, and terrorizing calamities. For more than five years she had been failing in all the springs of physical force and mental energy. Shattering the powers already debilitated by neuralgia and by the drug with which she deadened the tortures of the wearing malady, apoplexy had reduced her to the pitiable condition that rendered her the object of Lord Valentia's contempt. Temperate in every other particular of her diet, the emaciated, pale, melancholy woman had for a long period been a persistent and daily consumer of opium,—so free and steady a consumer of opium that she was taking six grains a day of the baneful anaphrodisiac drug. It was a physical impossibility for the Queen, thus broken by time and reduced by disease and debilitated by daily doses of poison, to have even the slightest disposition for the *liaison* of which Lord Valentia was induced by courtly scandal-mongers and angry politicians to think her guilty.

Aware of the evidential worthlessness of the scandalous memoirs of Maria Caroline by anonymous writers, and the similar histories by notorious professional libellers, who had the shamelessness to avow the authorship of their infamous fabrications, Monsieur Gagnière exults over the rank, the social dignity, and the official character of the English

viscount, who committed to the pages of his private journal such revolting testimony to the Queen's domestic and personal depravity. The tales of other writers to the same effect may be open to suspicion. But who can presume to question the truthfulness of the English diplomatist, the heir-apparent to a peerage, who was gathering information at Palermo for the enlightenment and guidance of the London cabinet, when he put in writing the story of Maria Caroline's *liaison* with an officer of the royal guard? 'Le rang de l'envoyé dans la hiérarchie sociale,' says Monsieur Gagnière, 'son nom, sa fortune excluaient tout soupçon . . . .' Who can venture to doubt the good faith and exactitude of the deposition of so exemplary a witness? It is thus that Monsieur Gagnière introduces the English nobleman to French readers.—Without a doubt Lord Valentia was no professional libeller. He was a man of social eminence and unimpeachable honour. It is also certain from his own words that, in thinking Maria Caroline guilty of vicious intercourse with Captain Afflitto, he charged her with surrendering herself to a passion of which she was at that time physically incapable. In respect to this matter Lord Valentia was the more easily misled by slanderous tattlers, because as an Englishman he was truthful himself, and therefore disposed to credit other people with truthfulness.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FURY OF FALSE TONGUES.

Maria Caroline's Defamers—Evidence of Facts touching her Disposition—Her Tastes and Pursuits—Her Ambitions and Amusements—Her religious Sensibility and devotional Earnestness—Experience of Human Nature—Judicial Attitude towards amazing Accusations—Malicious Tales and Falsehoods—Calumnies of the Revolutionary Period—Parisian Libellers—Maria Caroline's Offence against France—'The French Dog's' Book—Lomonaco's '*Rapport fait au Citoyen Carnot*'—Marchioness Sammarco—Charges of Immorality against Maria Caroline—Evidence in Support of the Charges—Disproof of the worst Accusations—Baron Alquier at Naples—Lord Valentia at Palermo—Sir William Hamilton and Maria Caroline—Humorous Anecdotes and scandalous Histories—The Admiral and the Ambassador—Emma Hamilton asks for Information—Nelson's Information and Warning.

In the course of this memoir of a greatly slandered queen, reference has been repeatedly made to her evil reputation for personal licentiousness, but I have shrunk from shocking my readers with the details of the charges against her domestic life and womanly honour. If calumny were a plant to die of neglect, I should forbear to speak more precisely of the accusations which have done more to cover Maria Caroline with opprobrium than all the censures poured upon her policies. To achieve the main purpose of the biography now drawing to its close, it is, however,

necessary that I should deal more exactly with the Queen's principal defamers, and exhibit some of the particulars of their abominable inventions.

Let us recall Maria Caroline as she is known to us from the indisputable facts of her earlier and brighter time, and consider whether her lineage, nurture, physical characteristics, mental endowments, early and steadily pursued ambitions, peculiar accomplishments, favourite pursuits, beneficent labours, domestic circumstances, sentimental preferences, affectionate impulses, maternal tenderness, fidelity in friendship, and devotional earnestness make it probable that she surpassed all the ruling women of modern history in personal abandonment to vile appetite.

There are ruling houses and ruling houses,—effete, degenerate, and utterly vitiated stocks; and regal families not more venerable for antiquity and glorious traditions than for the undiminished vigour and virtue of their latest generations. A princess of one of these supremely royal houses, Maria Theresa's daughter had inherited from her ancestors the overweening pride that disposed her to regard disdainfully all persons of inferior dignity,—a self-honouring sentiment that must at least have tended to preserve her from debasing intrigues with persons, whom she regarded as nothing more than her courtly servitors and ministerial dependents. Trained from earliest childhood to reverence herself, she was educated to form high conceptions of the grandeur and responsibilities of regal authority. Benevolent by nature, she had scarcely come to the age of legal discretion, when, falling under her brother Leopold's influence, she

conceived an ambition to distinguish herself by beneficence, and even surpass him in philanthropic achievement. Hence it came to pass that, on her first arrival in Italy, she was welcomed hopefully by the Neapolitan philanthropists and innovators as one of 'those philosophers in high places sent by God to regenerate the human race.' This hope was not speedily disappointed. Whilst delighting in the splendid diversions of her court, and in the elegant pleasures and innocent frivolities appropriate to so young and lovely a queen, she found her chief occupation in devising and carrying out new projects for compassing the greatest possible happiness of the greatest possible number of her people. Her life was brilliant, joyous, exciting, impressively splendid; but, above all other things, it was a life of beneficence,—an existence in which, from 1768 to 1790, from the hour of her marriage to the outbreak of the terrorizing French revolution, she was incessantly engaged on enterprises for the happiness of others.

Throughout this period she led in all ways the life of a delicate, fastidious, humane, and devout woman, whilst she, at the same time, presided over the pleasures of her brilliant and, in some respects, luxurious court. Participating in the more elegant diversions of her palace, she was remarkable for the same temperance in diet and indifference to the pleasures of the table, that were observed by Lord Valentia in the closing term of her career. Shining at balls and theatres, and delighting in courtly *promenades* and *fêtes champêtres*, she found higher enjoyment in the 'coteries,' at which she received her men of science

and men of letters, her thinkers and originators of 'laudable schemes,' who spoke with equal sincerity and enthusiasm of the strength and subtlety of her intellect, and worshipped her for her gracious disposition and manifold virtues. A sympathetic patron of all the finer arts, she was emphatically the friend of learning. Protecting Filangieri in his life, she mourned over his early grave, and provided munificently for his children.

Towards the prince, whom she married from ambition and considerations of *convenance*, and to their numerous offspring, whose lineaments (by the way) bore adequate testimony to the purity of their parentage, Maria Caroline's demeanour was amiable and womanly. After the wont of gentle mothers, she delighted in her children. Sympathetically mindful for their pleasures when they were well, she nursed them with her own hands through the ailments of infancy. If she ruled her husband, and, in managing him, had recourse to artifice, it cannot be denied that she was studious of his feelings, and careful to maintain a ceremonious show of reverence for his regal dignity and of deference to his marital authority. In all her letters (with a single exception) to Emma Hamilton, that relate in any way to the King, the Queen shows forth as a model of conjugal dutifulness. Nursing him when he is ill, she subordinates her own inclinations to his humour, affects to be governed by him even in so trivial a matter as an opera-dancer's passport, and hastens to accompany him on fatiguing journeys when she is suffering from sickness. Only once, in all her

frank and confidential correspondence with Lady Hamilton, does the Queen refer to her husband in terms of disrespect; and in this one exceptional epistle—written for the timely and needful warning of her *protégée*—Maria Caroline says nothing worse of the King than that, in a fit of overpowering wrath, he has recently spoken to her with unseemly violence. Living together in strong mutual attachment for some twenty years, the Queen and Ferdinand lived together without open discord for some ten years longer, though he from time to time gave her cause for wifely jealousy. That the always observant and suspicious Bourbon saw nothing to resent in his consort's behaviour till the date of Mack's fiasco, appears from the fact that up to the close of 1798, he was pleased to let her rule his realms with almost unqualified absolutism.

It is also to be remarked that, though she was never a *pieuse* in the severest sense of the term, and in her lighter moods displayed a keen appetite for pleasure, Maria Caroline may be fairly described as a religious woman. Turning on questions of ecclesiastical policy rather than on points of religious polemics, her quarrel with the Pope did not weaken her reverence for the doctrines and mysteries of the Christian faith. Esteem for philosophers never lessened her repugnance to the sceptical levity of the Parisian free-thinkers. Observant of her religious obligations during the years of her regal felicity, she had recourse to devotional exercises for solace in seasons of political misfortune, bodily distress, and spiritual trouble. Several of her letters to Emma

Hamilton display an equally significant and pathetic vein of devotional humility and earnestness. Though he could ridicule them for extravagance, the cynical Baron Alquier was constrained to recognize the sincerity of her religious professions. 'Amie tendre, mais aussi ennemie implacable,' he says, 'dévote et galante tour à tour . . . . . elle n'a jamais su se modérer en rien.'

Does his experience of human nature dispose or disincline the reader to think that, almost from the hour of her early marriage to the latest and darkest stage of her chequered existence, this overweeningly proud and fastidious Queen—so interested in the higher arts and fascinated by the learning of scholars, so stately in her bearing to the world and admirable to the wisest men, so benevolent in her designs, so beneficent in her labours, and so steadily religious—passed from *amour* to *amour* with people about her court, now smiling with a wicked purpose on a foreign ambassador, now lavishing meretricious favours on her chief minister of state, and now taking to her embrace an obscure gentleman-in-waiting? To believe her defamers is to believe that, between 1768 and 1791, she had seven paramours—Gualenga, the Duke Della Regina, Marsico, Dillon, Rosmoscky, the Prince Caramanico, and General Acton; that from 1791 to 1798 she persisted in her guilty attachment to General Acton, whilst continuing to cherish Emma Hamilton with the tenderness of immoral sympathy; that in 1800 she had a *liaison* with Nelson, which resulted in the birth of Horatia; and that between 1801 and 1811 she associated herself in shameful intrigue with

four other men—the naval captain named La Tour, the naval commander Ruffo, the French gentleman-in-waiting St. Clair, and Signor Afflitto—the captain of Ferdinand's guard. Moreover, to agree with the defamers is to believe that, besides forming these shameful leagues with twelve different men, this princess of lofty lineage and rare loveliness, entertained brief and fleeting passions for divers other men, who have dropped from the historic record. Does the reader's experience of human nature dispose him to believe that such an account of Maria Theresa's loveliest daughter can be true?

It may be answered that once and again in the course of centuries an indictment, which at the first view appears to be incredible, is proved true in every count; and that, strange and revolting though they are, these charges against one of the most remarkable actors of modern European history, must be reluctantly accepted for sad historic truth, if they are sustained by adequate testimony. The reply is reasonable. But in proportion as an accusation traverses his experience of human nature, the judge is severely critical of every item of the evidence, produced for the proof of the amazing charge. A page or two later, readers must bear this point in mind. An accusation may contradict universal experience and yet be true; but to demonstrate the truth of the accusation the evidence must be no less strangely strong.

In any age and land of modern European history the imperious Maria Caroline would have made for herself bitter political enemies, whose animosity

would have expressed itself in slanders upon her womanly honour. To suffer from such slanders is one of the penalties that ruling women pay for their greatness. At Naples Maria Caroline ruled an ardent and excitable people, quicker to resent injuries and fiercer in avenging them than the colder and less emotional peoples of the north. Joachim and Caroline Murat did not pass three full years in Naples without having enemies amongst their new subjects, who in their anger at real or imaginary grievances circulated stories amongst the populace to the serious discredit of the new king and queen. Speaking of these stories, Colletta says, 'Malicious tales and falsehoods circulated among the common people respecting the origin of the quarrels in the palace, and authors, who had first been the adherents, and afterwards became the enemies of the king and queen, did not disdain to confirm these calumnies, by inserting them in memoirs they called historical.' Some sixteen years earlier the malcontent Neapolitans acted in the same manner for the defamation of Ferdinand and Maria Caroline and General Acton, when the withdrawal of the money from the banks and the measures taken against the Neapolitan revolutionists had caused the King, Queen and minister to be cordially disliked by many people. This was the political method of the Neapolitan 'opposition.' First they set scandalous tales about the Queen in circulation, and then they embodied the rumours in memoirs, which they called historical.

Ruling subjects, who used defamation of the most repulsive sort as an instrument of party-warfare,

Maria Caroline ruled them in a period of European history, that gave unprecedented encouragement, facilities, and security to libellers, plying their poisonous pens for the discredit of royal persons. In this period of political passion and conflict, the revolutionary multitudes sincerely regarded kings and queens, and all powerful supporters of monarchical institutions, as individuals who spent the greater part of their time and excessive wealth in pursuing the pleasures of sensuality; and whilst the multitudes in all honesty took this view of ruling persons, the revolutionary leaders, who were alive to the general falseness and injustice of the view, used every art to confirm the multitudes in a notion, that whipped them to fiercer fury against the crowned oppressors of mankind.

So long as France suffered under the Directory, Paris was quick to strike with a scandalous memoir every sovereign who provoked her especial displeasure. By the beginning of 1794, Maria Caroline had incensed the Parisians by joining the league against the French republic, by co-operating with England and Spain at Toulon, by overpowering the Jacobins of Naples, and by declaring her abhorrence of the wretches who had consigned her sister to a cruel and ignominious death. Before the close of the year, Paris struck Maria Caroline with the defamatory publication, of which Emma Hamilton wrote with womanly indignation to Mr. Charles Greville on 18th December, 1794, saying of the Queen and the recent attack on her reputation:

'I live constantly with her, and have done so intimately

for two years, and I never have in all that time seen anything but goodness and sincerity in her, and if you hear any lies about her, contradict them, and if you should see a cursed book written by a vile French dog with her character in it, don't believe one word. She lent it to me last night, and I have by reading the infamous calumny put myself quite out of humour, that so good and virtuous a princess should be so infamously described.'

For this outrage the Queen had no remedy. Had the scandalous memoir been written and published in Vienna or Madrid, the book could have been seized, and its author and publisher sent to fit punishment. But at Paris the libeller escaped chastisement and found a multitude of credulous readers. All that the outraged Queen could do for the protection of her character against the fabrications of a dastardly assailant was to call the attention of friendly governments to the disgusting libel, so that its open sale and circulation might be confined as far as possible to France. In lending the book (probably one of the 'author's presentation copies') to Emma Hamilton, the Queen may be regarded as offering it to the notice of Sir William Hamilton. It is conceivable that Her Majesty submitted the flagitious treatise to other ambassadors, by lending it to other ladies of the diplomatic circle. But though official circumspection could prevent copies of the vile work from being openly dispersed in friendly states, no care on the part of *douaniers* and police-agents could close the channels of clandestine circulation to the libellous performance. To the grievous injury of the Queen's reputation, copies of 'the cursed book written by a vile French dog' passed secretly from Paris to every

European capital, that sheltered a coterie of revolutionary zealots or harboured a handful of wealthy readers, having a fine scent and morbid appetite for literary garbage. With all their vigilance Maria Caroline's police could not altogether exclude from her own capital the abominable book, whose tales had not been current for many months in Paris, before they were whispered about Naples with additional particulars, alike to the prejudice of the Queen, her husband and General Acton.

Hateful to the French revolutionists under the Directory, Maria Caroline became even more odious to the Buonapartists under the Consulate and the Empire. It followed that the Parisian hunger for tales to the infamy of the abominable Marie-Antoinette's even more abominable sister grew keener and more insatiable as she passed from her forty-second to her sixtieth year. The scandalous memoir of 1794 had not been long in existence, when the professional defamers were required to satisfy a demand for later and more piquant anecdotes of Her Majesty's vices and foibles. In the 'cursed book written by a vile French dog,' no reference was made to Maria Caroline's friendship with Emma Hamilton, which was still in its infancy, when the French dog's essay in personal slander went through the press at Paris. But in some of the later histories of Maria Theresa's loveliest daughter something more than sufficient prominence is given to the famous English beauty, who fascinated Nelson after winning the favour of the wicked Queen of Naples.

Incidents of '98 and '99 having rendered Lady

Hamilton a celebrated personage, the tattlers of the Parisian boulevards became curious about the notorious adventuress; and, to gratify this curiosity, the republicans of Paris put themselves in communication with their revolutionary sympathizers in London, where a good deal was known and much more was imagined to the disadvantage of Henry Lyon's offspring. The consequence was that, together with painful facts, discreditable inventions about Emma Hamilton passed from London to Paris, where the *mélange* of painful truth and malicious falsehood was manipulated by artists, who blackened the English adventuress, and magnified her failings and misdemeanours, in order to stimulate the general disgust for a Queen capable of delighting in so coarse and vulgar a demirep.

Of the scandalous histories of Maria Caroline, that were produced by her political enemies, none was more malignant, none has been more mischievous, than the composition which proceeded from Lomonaco's virulent pen, in the form of an official report on the secret causes and principal events of the troubles of Naples. Readers, who would learn to what base uses the pen can be put, and ascertain to what extravagances of fantastic malevolence a writer may be impelled by political passion, should do violence to their feelings by perusing Monsieur Gagnière's extracts from '*Le Rapport fait au citoyen Carnot, ministre de la guerre, sur les causes secrètes et les principaux événements de la catastrophe napolitaine, sur le caractère du roi, de la reine et du fameux Acton, par Fr. Lomonaco, patriote napolitain réfugié,*' a work that is quoted by

Monsieur Gagnière, as though its statements were authoritative, and its author a man of credit.

A political enthusiast, who in the course of the Parthenopeian convulsions rose to a place in the Directory of the short-lived republic, this Lomonaco during his brief tenure of official power was closely associated with several persons, who had enjoyed the confidence of the Jacobin conspirators, whilst affecting loyalty to the throne and holding places of dignity and emolument about the court; and it was from people of this false kind that he derived his conception of the Queen's character and habits.

One of the persons to play an artful game with the Queen on the one hand and the Queen's enemies on the other hand, during the years immediately preceding the Parthenopeian revolt, was the Marchioness Sammarco. Affecting to the Jacobin leaders a lively abhorrence of the Queen's measures for extinguishing their conspiracy, this marchioness affected towards Her Majesty a no less lively abhorrence of the arts and designs of the French party. An agent in the service of both parties, she conciliated the Queen with tales to the injury of the Jacobins, whose hearts she was secretly inflaming with tales to Her Majesty's discredit. Imagining, in December, '98, that it was all over with the royal cause, she openly deserted the Queen, declining to accompany her to Palermo, and even forbearing to come to her on board the *Vanguard* for an interview. So long as the republic bade fair to prosper, the Marchioness associated herself closely with the most violent of the republicans and entertained them with scandal against the Queen. The republic

had no sooner fallen than this paragon of feminine duplicity and malice entreated pardon of the Queen, who had the magnanimity to forgive the offender. The testimony of such a woman has been rated good testimony against the mistress whom she betrayed. Coming under the influence of the Marchioness Sammarco, when as an open republican she was most furious against the Queen, Lomonaco also became the friend of the Dama Migliano, the 'viper with an infernal tongue.' The pupil of such teachers, Lomonaco believed everything they told him to the dishonour of Maria Caroline.

Falling from the whirlwind which he had helped to raise and hoped to rule, Lomonaco migrated to Paris, and brooded in exile over his political misadventure, the failure of his projects, and all the monstrous tales he had received from rumour or the veracious Dama Migliano, 'the viper with an infernal tongue,' about the Queen and her amours, about Acton and his assassination of the Prince Caramanico, about Ferdinand's despicable infirmities. When memory failed him, fancy came to his assistance. To account for some of his statements it is charitable to assume that chagrin and fury had disordered the man's wits. Monsieur Gagnière forbears to exhibit the most extravagant of Lomonaco's frantic charges against the Queen he detested. 'L'italien,' says Monsieur Gagnière, 'dans ses mots bravant l'honnêteté, il nous est impossible de donner la suite.' Yet this frantic calumniator, whose most atrocious statements are omitted for decency's sake from the book of the French *littérateur*, has been brought into

court by successive historians as a discreet, conscientious, and reliable witness against the unhappy Queen of Naples.

It appears therefore that, whilst our experience of human nature forbids us to accept the statements of the Queen's defamers, we are not at a loss to account for the torrent of slanders which clothed her with infamy. The conditions under which she ruled the Two Sicilies, the animosities she provoked in Southern Italy by her measures for the welfare of her people in times prior to the great revolution, the resentment she provoked in Naples by the energy she displayed against the Jacobins of the capital, and the still fiercer passions she excited in France by her successive conflicts with the republic and the empire, would account for all the charges against her womanly honour, even had they been thrice as numerous and far more revolting.

What evidence can be produced in support of the charges, which are discredited by our experience of human nature, and so fully accounted for by political passion? From serious histories and scandalous memoirs, official reports and private journals, old newspapers and countless letters (published letters and still inedited letters), the student may gather conclusive testimony that, during the last five-and-twenty years of her existence, the Queen suffered from an evil reputation for personal depravity and revolting licentiousness. But mere evidence of disrepute is no evidence of wickedness,—no demonstration that the ill-repute was deserved, and that the charges of misconduct are true. The scandalous biographers,

the official reporters, the private and the public journalists, the countless letter-writers are Maria Caroline's innumerable accusers. It would be easy for me to publish their names, and no less easy to tell how they formulated their charges. But one looks in vain for so much as a scrap of sound evidence in support of the innumerable charges,—*i.e.*, a single evidential statement, that may not be rated as a distinctly slanderous invention, or a mere outcome of rumour. As the accusations against Maria Caroline of Naples never became the subject of judicial investigation, like the charges against our Caroline of Brunswick, there is no body of sifted and tested testimony from which the student may learn without much difficulty the general purport of the charges and the particular force and value of each of the many accusations. If the Queen's numerous accusers must be regarded from one point of view as witnesses against her, they are, one and all, hostile witnesses, whose extremely questionable evidence-in-chief was neither tested by cross-examination nor answered by evidence for the defence, under conditions favourable to the discovery of the truth.

Most of the accusers are mere anonymous scribblers, or notorious miscreants. A few of them were men of the highest worth, like Mr. Elliot who wrote of the Queen's 'sad favourites,' and Lord Collingwood who (after forming a very bad opinion of the Queen from report:—for he had only the slightest personal knowledge of her) wrote hard words about her depravity. These men of worth, of course, believed whatever they wrote to the Queen's dis-

honour; but under cross-examination, they would have been compelled to admit that common repute was their best authority for thinking her a wanton creature. Lord Valentia was unquestionably a man of honour, and no less incapable than Lord Collingwood of writing a single line of deliberate falsehood to the dishonour of any woman. Pressed on the point he would, however, have admitted that in thinking Maria Caroline guilty of a shameful attachment to Captain Afflitto, he only thought what his Sicilian acquaintances told him to think. Had he, after penning his unfortunate 'Character of the Queen,' learned how impossible it was for the shattered and opium-consuming Queen to be the guilty creature he had imagined her, the English nobleman would either have removed the calumny from the memoir or would have acknowledged his error in a note of 'peccavi.'

Though he was a self-seeking and time-serving politician, I am disposed to think Baron Alquier was nothing worse than the dupe of idle rumour, when he wrote from Naples, 'La reine est dans la ferveur d'une passion nouvelle, le commandeur Ruffo qu'elle quitte, est envoyé à Vienne en qualité d'ambassadeur; c'est une retraite donnée à un amant désormais inutile, une sinécure accordée à un invalide. Monsieur de Saint-Clair qui le remplace est un Français . . . . .' Possibly I take too charitable a view of Monsieur Alquier, who may be fairly styled one of 'Buonaparte's creatures,' and was sent to Naples not so much in the capacity of an ambassador as of a diplomatic *intriguant*, with instructions to create and nurse an Italian party favourable to

his master's designs on the Two Sicilies. Obsequious by nature, and wholly dependent on the rising tyrant's favour, Alquier would not have ventured to write to Paris strongly in favour of the Queen, whom Buonaparte detested. He was, of course, more likely to season his despatches with piquant tattle to Fredegonda's discredit, though he deemed it mere scandal, than to annoy his patron by denouncing her calumniators. As Alquier was no other man than Alquier, and served Maria Caroline's bitterest and most powerful enemy, it is of course conceivable that he did not really believe the scandalous rumours against the Queen, which he transmitted from Naples to Paris. But even though he believed the scandals, his adoption of the stories is no proof of their truth.

Whilst the charges preferred against Maria Caroline by her defamers are sustained by no sufficient evidence of guilt, and are discredited by the indisputable qualities of her intellect and moral disposition, and especially by the fact that she enjoyed the unqualified confidence and admiration of her husband during the greater part of the long period of her alleged immoralities, the four chief accusations have been utterly disproved by this biography.

(1) The most revolting of all the accusations against Maria Caroline relates to her intimacy with Emma Hamilton. By this biography it has been demonstrated that the Queen's intercourse with the adventuress was wholly guiltless of the immoral sympathy attributed to it by the calumniators who were alike ignorant of the prime facts of Emma

Hamilton's story, and of the considerations which determined the Queen to recognize and protect the lovely Englishwoman. From the first to the last note of the long series Maria Caroline's confidential letters to Emma Hamilton are the letters of a virtuous princess, addressing the woman of gentle estate, for whom she gradually conceived a strong affection, after drawing her to her private circle from motives of policy. Containing no single line (as Monsieur Gagnière admits) that might not be read to a young and innocent girl, these letters show the writer to have been an affectionate wife and devoted parent. They show that in seasons of affliction the Queen's intimacy with her *protégée* was stirred and influenced by impulses of religious conscientiousness and currents of devotional sensibility, which could never have distinguished their private intercommunications, had the two friends been such abnormally dissolute creatures as scandalous rumour declared them. In respect to this worst charge, Maria Caroline's innocence has been put beyond question.

(2) Next in the list of the calumnies, that have been especially hurtful to Maria Caroline's historic reputation stands the slanderous invention, which has caused so many hundreds of thousands of people to think of her as the ineffably cruel woman, who personally presided at Naples over the chastisement of the Parthenopeian rebels, stimulating the judges to excessive severity, repulsing with brutal scorn the petitioners for her clemency, and exulting over the achievements of her executioners. 'The King (says Alison), whose humanity could not endure the sight

of the punishments *which were preparing*, returned to Sicily, and left the administration of justice in the hands of the Queen and Lady Hamilton.' According to the defamers, who misled the culpably careless and credulous Alison, Maria Caroline was the vindictive virago who 'spared neither age, nor sex nor rank' in dealing with her helpless enemies.—It has been shown, that Ferdinand presided over 'the chastisement,' that Maria Caroline remained at Palermo while he was so employed, and that her diminished influence was exercised on the side of mercy. Maria Caroline therefore stands acquitted of the charges of cruelty and ruthlessness, that have done even more than the charges of personal licentiousness to make her a mark of universal and passionate obloquy.

(3) Though it has attracted little attention in France, and is altogether overlooked by some of the continental writers who are especially severe in their reflections on her character and career, Maria Caroline has suffered greatly in this country from the written statement, which pointed to her as the mother of Nelson's only surviving child. At the present date it may appear strange that Emma Hamilton's calumny on the Queen, who had distinguished her with caresses and loaded her with favours, was so generally believed. But it is not difficult to account for the credit accorded to 'about the vilest lie ever told by one woman of another woman.' Coming to us from the lips of Emma Hamilton, the slander came to us from the woman who had known the Queen for several years more intimately than any other person of Her Majesty's *entourage*, the woman who was the

Queen's peculiar confidante at the time of the incident which resulted in Horatia's birth, the woman who had enjoyed Nelson's fullest confidence in all matters relating to his daughter, the woman who had countless reasons for thinking gratefully and affectionately of Maria Caroline, and the woman who was justly regarded as a person peculiarly qualified to give evidence respecting Horatia's parentage. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that Lady Hamilton's statement to the Queen's infamy was generally believed in this country, and was regarded by Sir Harris Nicolas as a piece of testimony, to be preserved in the records of Nelson's life. Had the statement been true, the recorded fact would have been the more disgraceful to the Queen, because at the time of her alleged *liaison* with the English admiral she was aware of his passion for Emma Hamilton. But fortunately the falseness of the statement has been put beyond doubt by the conclusive evidence, that Horatia was Lady Hamilton's offspring. The Queen is therefore purged of this shameful imputation, which rested on stronger and more impressive testimony than any of the other charges against her womanly honour. The slander, uttered by Lady Hamilton merely to enhance the interest and value of a piece of plate which she was selling to a London silversmith, is a significant example of the levity with which charges of shocking immorality were made against the Queen by lying tongues.

(4) Lord Valentia's statement touching the Queen's personal relations with Captain Afflitto is another of the monstrous charges which have been conclusively

disproved. The scandalous rumour which occasioned the defamatory note in Lord Valentia's private journal is the more worthy of consideration, because the Neapolitan and Sicilian courtiers had no better reasons for thinking evil of the Queen's intercourse with Ruffo and St. Clair than they had for thinking evil of her intercourse with Afflitto. Contending that Maria Caroline was guilty of the immoralities of which she was accused by her defamers, Monsieur Gagnière demands a verdict against the Queen on the strength of the statements by Lord Valentia, Monsieur Alquier and Lomonaco,—*i.e.*, the English envoy's memorandum of a physical impossibility, the French diplomatist's sketchy reference to the Queen's reputation for gallantry, and the passionate extravagances of the Italian exile whose slanderous '*Rapport fait au citoyen Carnot*' overflows with rancour and is in places too obscene for quotation!

That Sir William Hamilton and the frantic Lomonaco took widely different views of Maria Caroline, we know from the pains the former took to place Emma Hamilton not only in Her Majesty's courteous and condescending regard, but in her peculiar confidence. No man in Europe had enjoyed better opportunities than Sir William Hamilton for knowing the Queen thoroughly and ascertaining what the world thought of her. Coming to Naples during Ferdinand's minority, he witnessed Maria Caroline's first arrival in her lovely capital. Still a young man, he figured amongst the courtiers who thronged the youthful bride's salons at her first receptions. Kneeling before her in the dawn of her loveliness, he

watched the development of her beauty from bud to blossom, and after seeing her slay Tanucci saw her rise superbly to the plenitude of her greatness. Acceptable to her from the year of her marriage as a man of courtly address and accomplishments, as a man of learning, and perhaps above all things as an exemplary Englishman (for, with the exception of her natal country, the young Queen honoured and loved England above all the nations of the earth), he grew in her favour as the years passed.

Valuing him for his intellectual endowments and labours, so long as she reverenced philosophers, she in later time prized him yet more highly as a statesman who abhorred republican sentiment and detested Napoleon. The Queen's admiration of the English minister was no stronger than his admiration of the princess who ruled her husband's realms for so many years with almost absolute authority. But, whilst honouring the Queen for the virtues of the loftier side of her nature, Sir William Hamilton, a keen observer and fine humourist, was fully alive to the foibles and frivolous traits of her character. Observant of her lively appetite for admiration, he remarked how quick she was to play on the vanity of her masculine idolaters, how apt to torture them with disdainful coquetries, and how ready in her lighter moods to enjoy the excitements of innocent flirtation. In a later period, he observed how she resembled our Elizabeth Tudor in preserving the thirst for admiration, when she had survived the charms that in the hey-day of her loveliness rendered her admirable to everyone. No less popular in the diplomatic circle

than favoured at court, the English minister moved also in the coteries of the capital, amongst the connoisseurs and the artists, the scholars and the *savans;* and wherever he went, he was quick to catch the flying gossip about the Queen. Cognizant of all that the discontented courtiers whispered to her discredit, he knew also what the inferior Jacobins muttered to her infamy. Had he believed the whispered slanders and the muttered calumnies, Sir William Hamilton might all the same have moved Her Majesty to invite Emma Hamilton to the palace on occasions of ceremony, but he would scarcely have exulted at the Queen's condescension in according to his beautiful wife the *entrée* to her cabinet and her bed-chamber.

In his old age, Sir William Hamilton's confidence in Nelson was without a reserve. Talking to Nelson as freely as he had ever talked to his nephew Charles Greville, the emotional and sympathetic veteran used to entertain the Admiral for hours at a time with anecdotes of the court in which he had lived for more than thirty years; and in his brief seasons of idleness Nelson used to scream with laughter till tears ran down his cheeks at the old raconteur's droll stories. In their conversations the talk often turned on the Queen's achievements in coquetry and flirtation; and we know from Nelson's pen how widely the ambassador's stories of the Queen in her lightest humour differed from the abominable tales told of her by her defamers.

That Nelson returned to England with the highest opinion of the Queen, and never harboured a disrespectful or unkind thought of her until she showed

a disposition to drop Emma Hamilton, appears from the terms in which he wrote and spoke of her. From the Baltic he wrote to Emma Hamilton expressing his hearty concurrence in her admiration of their queen, and his unqualified approval of her attachment to so virtuous a princess. At that time it was his design to carry Emma Hamilton at the earliest opportunity off to Sicily, in order that they might enjoy existence under Her Majesty's protection; and if the treaty of Amiens had resulted in an enduring peace, he would have carried out this project immediately after Sir William Hamilton's death, instead of returning to the Mediterranean for another term of arduous service. And a year later (May 27th, 1804), when the Queen had fallen greatly in his esteem, and he had for months been fuming at her coldness in the matter of 'the pension,' he regarded the scandalous tales about her as 'lies,' no syllable of which should be believed.

That during her long residence at the Neapolitan court Emma Hamilton discovered nothing in Maria Caroline's conversation and manner of living in the slightest degree accordant with the statements of Her Majesty's calumniators, appears from the way in which she wrote of the Queen in letters dated from Italy and Sicily, and in later time spoke of the Queen in England. Protesting hotly against the 'French dog's' calumnies in 1794, she returned to her native country in 1800 with undiminished confidence in the Queen's goodness, and more than three years later she was still indisposed to think evil of Her Majesty, when she wrote to Nelson to enquire whether there

could be any truth in what certain English newspapers and London tattlers were saying to Maria Caroline's discredit on the authority of so-called histories of her career. It was to this enquiry that Nelson replied on May 27th, 1804:

'The histories of the Queen are beyond whatever I heard from Sir William. Prince Leopold's establishment is all French. The Queen's favourite, Lieutenant St. Clair, was a subaltern; La Tour, the captain in the navy, and another. However, I never touch on these matters, for I care not how she amuses herself. It will be the upset of Acton, or rather he will not, I am told, stay. The king is angry with her; his love is long gone by. I have only one word more. Do not believe a syllable the newspapers say, or what you hear. Mankind seems fond of telling lies.'

When he penned these words, Nelson was angry with the Queen, whom he suspected of using her influence to compass General Acton's dismissal, and who had just offended him much more seriously by her significant reluctance to support Lady Hamilton's claim to a pension. But though in his irritation against the Queen he could write so unconcernedly of the slanders as tattle in which he took no interest, because it mattered nothing to him how the Queen amused herself, the Admiral did not forget to warn Emma Hamilton stoutly that she should disbelieve the stories, whether she *read* them in newspapers or *heard* them from the lips of idle chatterers.

In dealing with stories to Maria Caroline's personal shame, students should remember Nelson's words, 'Mankind seems fond of telling lies.' Mankind indulged the pernicious propensity to Marie-Antoinette's detriment, no less than to Maria Caroline's injury.

But whilst the foulest of the baseless slanders against Marie-Antoinette were formulated by lawyers with a specious affectation of concern for the truth, and were supported by depositions and answers to interrogatories that had some faint show and colour of evidential value, the calumnies against Maria Caroline never assumed for a moment the shape and complexion of legal testimony. To the last they were mere rumours current amongst the sort of people who seem and are 'fond of telling lies.'

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE END OF EMMA HAMILTON.

The Provision made for Lady Hamilton by her Husband—Nelson's larger Provision for her—Amount of the two Provisions—Quick March to financial Ruin—Mrs. Thomas of Hawarden—Old Mr. Kidd of Hawarden—Poor Relations—Lady Hamilton retires from Merton and Clarges Street—Her subsequent Places of Abode—Re-appearance of her first-born Child—Lady Hamilton's rapid Deterioration—Her scolding Letters to Horatia—Mother and Daughter at No. 12, Temple Place—Their grand Quarrel—Lady Hamilton and Horatia at Calais—Lady Hamilton's Death in the *Rue Française*—She dies in the Catholic Faith—And is buried with the Catholic Rite—Mr. Morrison's recently acquired Nelson-Hamilton MSS.—Their additional Testimony—Vindication of Nelson's Brother and Sisters—Kindness of Mrs. Bolton and Mrs. Matcham to Emma Hamilton.

1806—1815 A.D.

WHILST Maria Caroline's fortunes waned and darkened in Sicily, Emma Hamilton's affairs fell no less quickly to confusion and ruin in London. I have little to add to the account I gave of those affairs in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.'

Having paid (or, to speak precisely, having undertaken to pay) all her acknowledged debts amounting to seven hundred pounds, shortly before his death, Sir William Hamilton at his death in April, 1803, left his widow by will an immediate legacy of eight hundred pounds, and a well-secured annuity for life

of the same amount. When it is remembered how just two years and two months earlier he assigned to Alexander Davison the plate, furniture, and *objets d'art* of No. 23, Piccadilly (appraised at five thousand pounds) in trust for his wife's absolute use, it cannot be fairly said that Sir William Hamilton left his widow without adequate provision. During the interval between Sir William Hamilton's death and Nelson's death, Lady Hamilton had received from the Admiral an allowance of one thousand two hundred a-year in punctually rendered quarterly payments, and had enjoyed the free use of his house and establishment at Merton. Moreover, Nelson made her handsome presents in money (one of the gifts being bank-notes for a hundred pounds) over and above the regular allowance. By will Nelson left her property (inclusive of four thousand pounds settled on his only child) that may be computed at twenty-five thousand pounds. He left her, together with other things of value, a legacy of two thousand pounds, yielding one hundred pounds per annum, five hundred pounds a-year for life secured to her as a first charge on his Bronté estate, the interest of the four thousand pounds until the completion of Horatia's eighteenth year, and his house at Merton with seventy acres of adjacent land. Sufficiently endowed for a widow of her rank and station by her husband, she was still more liberally provided for by Nelson. Each provision was adequate for a woman of her degree; put together, the two provisions were a noble endowment. Thus doubly endowed, Lady Hamilton contrived to squander her resources so rapidly that in the autumn

of 1808, within three years of Nelson's death, she was compelled to leave Merton Place, give up her house in Clarges Street, and assign all the residue of her property to a committee of friends, in order that they should do their best to save a small remnant of the estate for her future support. In so short a time did Lady Hamilton reduce herself from enviable affluence to comparative indigence.

How did she manage to make away with so many thousands in so few years? In my inability to answer this question in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' I expressed my suspicion that, before Sir William Hamilton's death, she was encumbered with debts of which he knew nothing, and that, after his death, debts multiplied upon her whilst she lived at Merton under Nelson's protection.' For these words I was called to order by a critic who reproved me for merely suspecting a truth which I ought to have learnt from the exact evidence of a letter (published in Evans's 'Statement regarding the Nelson Coat,' p. 37), in which Mr. Charles Greville wrote on June 8th, 1803, to Lady Hamilton:

> 'You had on Saturday my letter regretting the amount of your bills and the impossibility of all being paid, but that I would be able to pay you *on account* what would be required for you before you went . . . . . I expect to find Mr. Coutts will sell the stock of £7,000—which will not be sufficient to pay the bills—and I shall see to paying them without delay.'

But through deficient acquaintance with the affairs that devolved on Mr. Greville, as his uncle's executor and residuary legatee, my critic made a pardonable mis-

take in inferring from these words that Lady Hamilton's personal debts exceeded the seven thousand pounds' stock, and that she had requested her late husband's executor to pay them. Mr. Greville was thinking of three different sets of bills, (*a*) the still unpaid part (amounting to five hundred and eighty pounds) of the bills amounting to seven hundred pounds, which Sir William Hamilton had undertaken to pay, in order to set his wife free from indebtedness; (*b*) the bills for the current expenses of No. 23, Piccadilly, which would probably fall upon Sir William's estate, and (*c*) the entire body of the bills against the same estate. It was of this last set of bills to which Mr. Greville referred, when he wrote that the seven thousand pounds stock would not suffice to pay them. The quoted words, therefore, afford no evidence, either exact or general, as to the matter which I ventured to suspect. There are grounds for the suspicion. But the evidence, which would completely justify it, is still to be discovered.

There still exists a super-abundance of documentary evidence, that Lady Hamilton's munificence to her poor relatives contributed in a considerable degree to her impoverishment. Whilst giving money and clothing to the cousins Connor *alias* Carew, and the cousins Carew *alias* Connor, and the cousins Reynolds *alias* Rynolds, who hung about her in Clarges Street and preyed upon her larder in Merton, she sent more money than she could afford to aged and necessitous cousins in the north-country. In November, 1807, when her affairs were making quick progress to the grand crash of insolvency, she sent

to Mrs. Thomas of Hawarden five pounds, for that lady to spend on the relief of the old Mr. Kidd of Hawarden, to whom I referred in the first part of this work as an aged and indigent Kidd, who was not 'brought up to work.' At the same time she undertook to pay one Mrs. Nicol of Hawarden (a woman on the point of retiring from the position of landlady to one of the Hawarden ale-houses) the weekly sum of ten-shillings and sixpence for lodging, boarding and 'doing for' the same necessitous Kidd, who was somehow related to Mrs. Nicol of Hawarden, even as he was somehow related to Lady Hamilton of Clarges Street and Merton Place.

But Lady Hamilton's liberality to her necessitous kindred was much less accountable than her prodigality towards herself for 'the crash' that followed so soon on Nelson's death. Maintaining two establishments, when she should have been content with one, she squandered money at Merton and also in Clarges Street, on a mob of new friends, some of whom were dangerous acquaintances. Keeping a better carriage and horses, and more servants than were needful for her position, she ran deep in debt with milliners and dress-makers, paying (or rather promising to pay) high prices for the lace with which she trimmed her underclothing. Nelson had not been long under the roof of St. Paul's when, in a conversation about the toilet and its charges, Lady Hamilton made a party of gentlewomen open their eyes with astonishment and smile at one another, by raising the skirt of her outer dress, and saying, as she pointed to the rows of lace on her petticoat, 'Just see; I paid

five guineas a-yard for all that!' Giving musical-parties, she made her town house a place of re-union for opera-singers, to whom she played the part of a patroness. Running into litigation, she was bled by the lawyers. To the humble sharers of her discreditable secrets, she was continually giving the money for which her milkman and butcher were clamouring. When she was flush of money, she gave freely to street-beggars. Moreover (to make use of her own words), she showed 'her good-nature in being bail for a person whom she thought honourable,'—an act of indiscretion to which she attributed her financial collapse more than to anything else. But all this fails to account for the quickness with which she went through her money, unless the 'person whom she thought honourable' let her into a *very* big scrape. She is said to have gambled, but I have no evidence that she lost much money by dice or cards, though she numbered amongst her 'friends' several people who were well qualified to rob her at any game. One of these 'friends' carried off from Merton the letters, which he turned into money by turning them into 'Letters of Lord Nelson to Lady Hamilton' (1814).

On leaving Merton, and giving up her house in Clarges Street, Lady Hamilton lived something over a year at Richmond, where she had two successive places of abode, or at least places of address,—Heron Court and Hill Street. At the end of 1809, she was lodging in Albemarle Street, Piccadilly. In 1810, she had lodgings at different times at No. 136 or No. 156, New Bond Street, at No. 76, Piccadilly

(opposite the Green Park), at Bridgman's, the confectioner's shop in Piccadilly, and at No. 16, Dover Street. On the New Year's Day of 1811, she was still living at No. 16, Dover Street, whence she moved in the same year to No. 150, Bond Street. Somewhere about this time she tarried for awhile at the New Hotel, Bond Street. In 1813 she was lying 'latitans' at Fulham, under the roof of Mrs. Billington the actress, whom she had befriended years syne at Naples. Her last London address was No. 12, Temple Place, within the rules of the King's Bench prison. So long as she could choose her habitation, she lodged here and there in the quarter, where she had figured for more than seven years as a fashionable householder; but 'beggars cannot be choosers,' and in 1813 she went to Fulham, because it was no longer safe for her to linger in the district she preferred. In the summer of 1813 she took apartments at No. 12, Temple Place, because the only alternative to living within the rules, accorded to her by cruel circumstances, was to live within the walls of the prison.

The following mysterious and imperfectly dated letter seems to have been written by Lady Hamilton's first-born child, the 'little Em'ly' of undiscovered paternity:—

Miss [. . . .] *to Lady Hamilton*, 16, *Dover Street.*

[Sunday, . . . November, 1811.]

'My dear Lady Hamilton,

'Mrs. Denis's mention of your name and the conversation she had with you have revived ideas in my mind, which an absence of four years has not been able to efface. It might have been happy for me to have forgotten

the past, and to have began a new life with new ideas; but for my misfortune, my memory traces back circumstances which have taught me too much, yet not quite all I could have wish'd to have known. With you that resides, and ample reasons no doubt you have for not imparting them to me. Had you felt yourself at liberty so to have done, I might have become reconciled to my former situation, and have been relieved from the painful employment I now pursue. It was necessary as I then stood, for I had nothing to support me but the affection I bore you; on the other hand doubts and fears by turns oppressed me, and I am determined to rely on my own efforts, rather than submit to abject dependance, without a permanent name or acknowledged parents. That I should have taken such a step, shews at least that I have a mind misfortune has not subdued. That I should persevere in it is what I owe to myself and to you, for it shall never be said that I avail myself of your parti [ ] or my inclination, unless I learn my claim on you is greater than you have hitherto acknowledged; but the time may come when the same reasons may cease to operate, and then with a heart filled with tenderness and affection, will I shew you both my duty and attachment. In the mean time should Mrs. Denis's zeal and kindness not have overrated your expressions respecting me, and that you should really wish to see me, I may [be] believed in saying, that such a meeting would be one of the happiest moments of my life, but for the reflection that it may also be the last, as I leave England in a few days, and may possibly never return to it again.

'I remain your

'Devoted and Obedient Servant,

[. . . . .]

Having begun in Italy some three or four years after her marriage, Lady Hamilton's deterioration moved gradually onward till Nelson's death, after which event she dis-improved rapidly in appearance, taste, style, intellect and moral nature. Nothing short of confluent small-pox would have utterly

extinguished her beauty, which was remarkable for characteristics, that are not soon put out of sight by *embonpoint*. Admirable to the last for her noble countenance, clear complexion, and graceful neck, she never lost the daintiness of her 'unusual mouth.' Sitting or standing at ease, she had a mien of dignity even till her last illness, though she lived to move heavily and waddle as she went. She retained her old 'charming naturalness,' though nice critics of style and manner sometimes could detect cunning under her show of candour, and insincerity in her cheery talkativeness. Noisy and too free of speech before her withdrawal from Italy, she grew more loud and boastfully loquacious in her closing years. One must speak more severely of her moral deterioration. Temperate in diet, truthful and scrupulously honest in pecuniary matters, when she lived with Mr. Greville at Paddington Green, she became in her later time greedily self-indulgent, unveracious and unscrupulous in affairs of money. Without ever becoming the habitually deep tippler her enemies declared her, she drank too freely for health. Always a fervid and emotional creature, she grew peevish, perverse, and passionately resentful under the annoyance and humiliations of her latest years.

It was in the period of her rapid deterioration that she quarrelled with Earl Nelson, and charged him with dishonour of which he is innocent. At a later date of her downward course, to enhance the price of a silver mug which she was selling to a Strand silversmith, she made the written statement, charging the

Queen of Naples with being the mother of Nelson's child.

Though she was an affectionate, fondly proud and upon the whole a sympathetic and good parent towards her youngest child, there were times when she scolded poor little Horatia far too severely, after the wont of old-fashioned mammas. There were also occasions, when Lady Hamilton wrote Horatia scolding letters that dispose me to think the poor child was much less to blame than her mother for their pitiful domestic squabbles. Here is one of the letters of reproof:

Lady Hamilton to her daughter Horatia.

'April 18th, Easter Sunday, 1813.

'Listen to a kind good mother, who has ever been to you affectionate [and] truly kind, and who has neither spared pains nor expense to make you the most amiable and most accomplished of your sex. Ah! Horatia, if you had grown up as I wished you, what a joy, what a comfort might you have been to me! For I have been constant to you and willingly pleased for every manifestation you shewed to learn and profit of my lessons, and I have ever been most willing to overlook injuries. But now 'tis for yourself I speak and write. Look into yourself well; correct yourself of your errors, your caprices, your nonsensical follies, for by your inattention you have forfeited all claims to my future kindness. I have weathered many a storm for your sake. But these frequent blows have killed me. Listen then from a mother who speaks from the Dead. Reform your conduct, or you will be detested by all the world, and when you shall no longer have my fostering care to shield you, whoe betide you, for you will sink to nothing. Be good, be honourable, tell not falsehoods, be not capricious, follow the advice of the mother whom I shall place [over]

you in a school, for a governess must act as a mother. I grieve and lament to see the increasing strength of your turbulent passions. I weep and pray you may not be totally lost. My fervent prayers are offerd up to God for you. I hope you will yet become sensible of your eternal wellfare. I shall go join your father and my blessed mother, and may you on your death-bed have as little reproach yourself [with] as your once affectionate mother has! for I can [ ] and say I was a good child. *Can Horatia Nelson say so? I am unhappy to say you cannot.* No answer to this. I shall to-morrow look out for a school for your sake, and to *save you*, that you may bless the memory of an injured mother.

'Emma Hamilton.

'Look at me now as gone from this world.'

The reader who peruses this letter without lively amusement is more wanting than most people in humorous sensibility. The postscript is delightful. To think of poor little Horatia bringing her mother's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, and being ordered to think henceforth of her mother as 'gone from this world,' and to meditate on the lecture as on the words of 'a mother speaking from the dead.' Since Thackeray gave us the Doctor's last lecture to Arthur Pendennis at Smiff'le school, no finer example of an obsolete fashion of rating young persons into contrition has been offered to Victorian students of the manners of their ancestors. Of course, Emma Hamilton had no serious intention of sending Horatia to school,—a step that would have made a big hole into the interest (two hundred pounds a-year) of the money settled on the young lady. By the Easter of 1813, the two hundred a-year was the greater part of the income to which Lady Hamilton's more than two thousand a-year had dwindled. Moreover,

Emma Hamilton loved Horatia much too well, to be capable of living with contentment at a distance from her. From the letter it appears that at least as early as Easter, 1813, Horatia had learnt from Lady Hamilton the relation in which they stood to one another.

Something more than six months later, when the mother and daughter were living within the rules of the King's Bench prison, Horatia was again threatened with banishment to a school, as soon as a committee of five discreet and judicially-disposed persons—to wit, Colonel and Mrs. Smith Trickey, Mr. and Mrs. Denis and Dr. Noton—should by the examination of witnesses,—to wit, Nancy of Richmond, Mr. Slop, Mrs. Size and Mr. Deare,—have ascertained how wicked a girl she was to accuse her dear mamma of 'using her ill.' Yet, further, Emma threatened to tell Colonel and Mrs. Clive of the naughty girl's unnatural wickedness in laying and maturing 'barbarous scenes (*sic*) on' her own mother's 'person, life and honnor'. If the committee met and inquired into the charges preferred by the elder against the younger prisoner, they of course recommended the two prisoners 'within the rules' to forgive and kiss one another, and live happily together ever afterwards.

Lady Hamilton to Horatia Nelson.

'October 31st, 1813.

'HORATIA,

'Your conduct is so bad, your falsehoods so dreadfull, your cruel treatment to me such, that I cannot live under these afflicting circumstances. My heart is

broken. If my poor mother was living to take my part, broken as I am with grief and ill health, I should be happy to breathe my last in her arms. I thank you for what you have done to-day. You have helped me on nearer to God, and may God forgive you! In two days all will be arranged for your establishment; and on Tuesday at 12, Colonel and Mrs. Smith Trickey, Mr. and Mrs. Denis [and] Dr. Noton will be here to hear all. Every servant shall be put on there oath, as I shall send for Nancy at Richmond, Mr. Slop, Mrs. Size, Mr. Deare, and get letters from the Boltons and Matchams, to confront you and tell the truth, if I have used you ill; but the all-seeing eye of God knows my innocence. It is therefore my command that you do not speak to me till Tuesday; and if to-day you do speak to me, I will that moment let Colonel and Mrs. Clive into all your barbarous scenes (*sic*) on my person, life and honnor.

'EMMA HAMILTON.'

Liberated from the King's Bench prison in 1814 after ten months of qualified captivity, Lady Hamilton escaped from her creditors by flying with her child in the spring or early summer of that year to Calais, in or near which town she passed the remaining months of her existence, under circumstances set forth in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.' Writing from 'Hotel Dessin,* Calais,' to the Right Hon. George Rose on 4th July, 1814 (*not* 1813, as the editor of the statesman's 'Diary' imagined), she remained with Horatia in the little town till the hot weather drove her to the country. In the lodgings

* In 1874 the late Mrs. Ward wrote of her mother as occupying at this time rooms in 'Quillac's Hotel.' Possibly in her seventy-fourth year Mrs. Ward forgot the name of the hotel, or perhaps the proprietor of Dessin's Hotel was named Quillac. Mrs. Ward may have been right; but it is certain that Lady Hamilton dated her letters from, and instructed her correspondents to address to her at, Dessin's Hotel.

at a farmhouse of the Commune of St. Pierre, whence she wrote on 21st September, 1814, to the Hon. Robert Fulke Greville a letter known to readers of my fuller narrative of her career, she stayed with Horatia some three months, before she returned to Calais and took possession of the apartment in the Rue Française, where she died after a short illness on 15th January, 1815.

For particulars of her last illness and of her pecuniary circumstances at the time of her death, readers are referred to 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' where it is shown that though she closed her life in comparative indigence, her condition was not so painfully necessitous as Mrs. Hunter's sensational statements caused Dr. Pettigrew to imagine. In a recently-published letter the late Mrs. Ward (Horatia) wrote in 1874, 'Although often certainly under very distressing circumstances, she never experienced actual want, or received assistance from *any one* of the kind which Mrs. Hunter imagined she had afforded.' Care was taken in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' to warn readers against accepting any statement by Mrs. Hunter with unqualified confidence in its accuracy; and Mr. Morrison's recently acquired Nelson-Hamilton MSS. afford remarkable evidence that I was justified in being so distrustful of the lady's recollections. From the memorandum of charges for Lady Hamilton's funeral, and the receipt for their payment, which have come to light amongst those MSS., it appears that Mrs. Hunter was wholly at fault in representing to Dr. Pettigrew that the adventuress died within the lines of protestant orthodoxy,

and was buried in accordance with the Anglican rite. A catholic during her later years, Emma Hamilton received the ministrations of a catholic priest on her death-bed, and was interred with due observance of the catholic rite. 'The service,' Mrs. Ward wrote of her mother's funeral in 1874 to Mr. Paget, 'was read over the body by a Roman Catholic priest who had attended her at her request during her illness;' and Horatia's testimony on this interesting point is countenanced by the following papers which came to view on the examination of Mr. Morrison's recently-acquired MSS., since the publication of my memoir of the beauty:—

(1) 'Funeral expenses of the late Lady Emma Hamilton, as paid by me, Henry Cadogan, at Calais in France, Jany. 1815. An oak coffin (corked?), church expenses, priests (candells), burial ground, men sitting, dressing the body, spirits, &c. £28, 10*s*.'—And (2) 'Rec^{d}, Feby 4th, 1815, of J J Smith esq. the sum of twenty-eight pounds ten shillings being the amount of Funeral expenses for the late Lady Emma Hamilton at Calais in France as paid by me.

'£28, 10*s*. 'Henry Cadogan.'

On another interesting point Mr. Morrison's recently acquired Nelson-Hamilton manuscripts afford some acceptable evidence. In 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson' I put it beyond question, that whilst acting honourably in respect to the famous so-called codicil, the first Earl Nelson gave Emma Hamilton no grounds for complaining to her partisans of his conduct towards her. In the same book I expressed a strong opinion that the Admiral's nearest kindred deserved none of the indignant censure, that has been poured upon them for neglecting her after his

death. How right I was on this point appears from the additional evidence of the newly-recovered papers. No one can thoroughly examine Mr. Morrison's enlarged collection of Nelson-Hamilton writings without concurring in my judgment that 'extravagantly untrue things have been said of the way in which Nelson's people abandoned the poor woman, as soon as her favour ceased to be valuable to them.' After his famous brother's death, Earl Nelson displayed a creditable disposition to live in friendship with Lady Hamilton; and, in withdrawing from her society in the course of 1806, he only did what she wished and compelled him to do. The quarrel between them was a quarrel of her making. Aspersing his honour, she did her utmost to render him a mark of social contempt.

In spite of her misconduct to their living brother, and their several good reasons for resenting the part she had played in their domestic circle, Nelson's sisters persisted in treating her with exemplary forbearance and generosity. From a number of papers preserved in Mr. Morrison's cabinets it may be learnt how considerate the two sisters were for her feelings and social credit. Had she been the Admiral's decorous wife instead of his lamentably notorious mistress, they could not have offered her more attention. Inviting her to their houses in the country, they showed a desire to maintain a sisterly intercourse with her. Whilst the Boltons were tenants of the wooded home of the Norfolk Haggards, Lady Hamilton went year after year to Bradenham Hall, where she was regarded with a curious mixture of admira-

tion and disapproval by the villagers, who knew too much of her story to hold her in the respect due to 'ladies of quality.' It is remembered by a well-known Norfolk squire how an old man of Bradenham village (whilom under-gardener 'at the Hall' in the years when Emma Hamilton paid long visits there) used to say of the famous beauty, 'Ah! sir, she wor a right fine . . . . , she wor!'—the perfect utterance showing that the old Bradenham villager took a homely and realistic view of the right fine lady's social status. When Lady Hamilton was in town, a steady stream of chatty letters came to her from Mrs. Bolton and Mrs. Bolton's daughters.

Mrs. Matcham was no less persistent in showing signs of sisterly attachment to her brother's enchantress; and she persisted in this generous demeanour to the failing and falling adventuress, long after the most cynical observer could attribute the persistence in kindliness to a self-seeking motive. In the summer of 1809, the summer following 'the crash,' which made it manifest to all the world that she was, as the phrase goes, 'booked for utter ruin,' Lady Hamilton was entreated by Mrs. Matcham to come to her in the country, together with Horatia and Mrs. Cadogan. Two years later, when she was in lodgings at No. 16, Dover Street, without money in her purse for current expenses, Lady Hamilton wrote to Mr. Matcham, for a loan of a hundred pounds. Though 'fairly well off,' the Matchams were far from rich people. Ten days earlier they could not have put hand on so large a sum. But Mr. Matcham had just received seven hundred pounds, which he was under

obligation to pay over to the trustees of his wife's marriage settlement. After consulting together, the husband and wife decided to send one hundred pounds of this money to Emma Hamilton. And the money was sent to Dover Street. The consequences of this free-handed but scarcely justifiable generosity may be left to the reader's imagination.

It was thus that for years after Nelson's death Emma Hamilton was treated by the people, whom biographers have accused of cold-shouldering and abandoning her, as soon as they ceased to have a selfish interest in her goodwill.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FROM SICILY TO THE GRAVE.

Recall of Lord Amherst—His Successor in Sicily—Lord William Bentinck's Arrival in Sicily—His Candour to the Queen—Her Indignation—Lord William Bentinck's Return to London—His Re-appearance at Palermo—Reform and Revolution—Deposition of Maria Caroline—Ferdinand's futile Manifesto—His Withdrawal to 'La Favorita'—The Captain-General's Display of Force—Ferdinand's Submission—Maria Caroline retreats to the Mountains—Her Fastness on the Hills—Her Guard of Peasants—She is taken Prisoner—Her Banishment from Sicily—Her Sojourn in Sardinia—Her Stay at Zante—She receives the Marchioness Solari at Zante—Maria Caroline's Statement of her Case—The Wild Fable—The Queen's Forgiveness of her Enemies—Her Hope of Justice—Congress of Vienna—Maria Caroline's Death—Final Judgment.

1811—1814 A.D.

WHAT remains to be told of Maria Caroline's story may be told in a few pages, and no humane reader would wish the narrative of her closing troubles and humiliations to be prolonged by a single needless line.

Lord Valentia's arrival at Palermo was followed at no long interval by Lord Amherst's recall and the appointment of Lord William Cavendish Bentinck to the chief command of the British troops in Sicily, and to the office of British minister at the Sicilian court. On coming to Maria Caroline's knowledge on

9th April, 1811, the news of Lord William's appointment was more startling than agreeable to Her Majesty. In her alarm at the intelligence she told Ferdinand that Great Britain was sending a vice-roy instead of an ambassador to Sicily. 'What difference will it make to me and my subjects?' Ferdinand replied, with a laugh. 'We shall only have a master instead of a mistress to manage us!' There certainly was need of a new manager; and Sicilian affairs went rapidly from bad to worse in the three months and a fortnight, that intervened between the arrival of the intelligence which Ferdinand received so unconcernedly, and the arrival of the military envoy, who landed at Palermo on 24th July, 1811, just five days after the arrest of the barons.

According with Ferdinand's jest, the event justified the Queen's fear. Coming to Sicily less as a dictator than an ambassador, Lord William Cavendish Bentinck in a few months became the actual ruler of the island. A soldier, whose plain style and unassuming demeanour caused a French writer to speak of his quaker-like simplicity, the envoy from Great Britain was a man of strong head, despotic temper and resolute will. Resembling Nelson in daring to act on the spirit of his instructions when emergencies required him to exceed their letter, he was peculiarly qualified for a task that demanded more of military decisiveness than diplomatic tact and delicacy. Disdaining to veil his purpose with specious phrases, he told the Queen frankly that he had come in the interest of Great Britain to side with the barons, and that she must yield to his will. The unconstitutional edicts for

levying money must be cancelled, and the imprisoned barons must be enlarged. It mattered not to him that she approved the edicts, and was of opinion that the imprisonment of the barons was needful for the security of her realm. Her opinions must yield to his judgment, her wishes to his will. The Queen's amazement at the ambassador's requirements and overbearing tone was attended by a shrewd suspicion that he had exceeded his instructions, and she demanded haughtily by what authority he presumed to speak as though he were himself the King of Sicily. Making no attempt to conceal that he had exceeded his instructions, the envoy intimated that his authority would be enlarged, so as to accord with his view of the necessities of the position. At a subsequent interview with Her Majesty, Lord William Bentinck told the astonished and indignant Queen that she must choose between granting her subjects a larger constitution or abiding the consequences of a revolution.

Having put the case thus strongly to the astounded Queen, the military envoy hastened his preparations for a journey back to Great Britain. Sailing from Sicily on the 28th of August, 1811, when he had spent just five weeks in studying the several aspects and in considering the several problems of an equally urgent and perplexing question, Lord William Bentinck returned to London, but only to re-appear in Sicily, after an interval of three months, with a free and strengthened hand, to act on his judgment without reference to the feelings and technical right of Their Sicilian Majesties. Deliberation having

failed to make the Queen more manageable, and Ferdinand displaying no disposition to withdraw from her side, the English nobleman threatened to send them both to England, and place the son of the hereditary Prince Francis on the throne, with the Duke of Orleans and the Prince of Belmonte for regents during the infancy of the child, who was only two years old. To render this menace more effective, the dictator drew twelve thousand troops to Palermo with significant promptitude. It was vain for the Queen to exclaim against the domination of the foreigners, whom she had admitted to her kingdom as allies. Her threat of military resistance was ludicrous; for the temper of the Sicilian regiments was fairly described by Lord Valentia, when he spoke of them as being 'at the command of the first purchaser.' In the conflict of words, Maria Caroline played her last card when she threatened to resist force *with* force. This card Lord William Bentinck over-trumped with an intimation that he had the power to suspend the British subsidy of four hundred thousand pounds, and should not hesitate to suspend it, if policy required him to do so. This menace was significant. By uttering it, the firm, cool, clear-headed, quaker-like soldier offered to become 'the first purchaser' of Maria Caroline's army.

Inflexible to the overbearing dictator, though unsupported by her council, Maria Caroline withdrew to one of her country houses in the neighbourhood of Palermo, whilst Ferdinand came to terms with the master of the position. Had she been thoughtful for her dignity, she would have forborne to prolong

an unequal contest, from which she could reap nothing but humiliation. Instead of retiring to a distance of a few miles from the capital, she would now have declared her purpose of retiring to the land of her birth. But the time had passed when she could perceive either what her dignity required or what her interest demanded.

Struck by the threat, that fell upon the Queen as lightly as a feather, Ferdinand realized the perils of his case, and saw the necessity of surrendering to the will of Great Britain. The King's grand act of submission to the irresistible Lord William Bentinck was made on the 16th of January, 1812, by the following appointment:

Ferdinand IV. of Naples and Sicily to his son Francis, Hereditary Prince.

'My most esteemed son Francis, Hereditary Prince of the Two Sicilies, Being obliged through indisposition, and from the advice of the Physicians, to breathe the air of the country, and to withdraw myself from all serious application . . . . I constitute and appoint you my Vicar-General in this my Kingdom of Sicily, in the same way as you have been already twice Vicar-General in my Kingdom of Naples; and I yield and transfer to you with the ample title of "Alter Ego" the exercise of all the rights, prerogatives, pre-eminences, and powers which could be exercised by myself . . . . Given at Palermo this 16th day of January, 1812.'

It is worthy of observation that this letter of appointment was no permanent Act of Abdication, but an exercise of a royal prerogative which was of itself evidence that the King's authority over his realms was in no degree diminished by the instrument. The

act of appointment was revocable at pleasure. As the appointment was made in consideration of the King's ill health, the terms of the instrument implied that it would be revoked on his restoration to health. Lord Castlereagh assured the House of Lords that no fraud, menace, or violence was used by Lord William Bentinck to induce Ferdinand to make the appointment. But, though it was a free and revocable act, there was of course an understanding between Ferdinand and Lord William Bentinck that the appointment would endure as long as it was needful for the interests of Sicily and Great Britain. Until it should be revoked, the appointment would operate as an Act of Abdication by making Prince Francis king, for all practical purposes, in his father's stead. Moreover, as the Hereditary Prince Francis was in no degree under his mother's influence, but was on the contrary in cordial opposition to her, the appointment would put an end to her authority over the affairs of the country. Hence it became the practice of public writers to speak of the appointment as an act for the Queen's deposition.

Lord William Bentinck's re-appearance in Sicily was followed by other changes. The unconstitutional edicts for levying money were cancelled. The imprisoned barons were restored to liberty. Maria Caroline's unpopular ministers were replaced by statesmen who at least for a time were acceptable to the people. As Captain-General of Sicily, Lord William Bentinck obtained the chief command of the Sicilian army, as well as of the British forces on the island. Provided with a new constitution,

framed on the model of a constitution which our grandfathers used to reverence as 'the perfection of human wisdom,' Sicily was endowed with a House of Lords and a House of Commons, responsible ministers, independent judges, and divers other things and arrangements conducive to human happiness. Taking upon itself the management of the crown lands, the nation endowed the crown with a liberal revenue.

Far from anticipating, probably still farther from hoping that Maria Caroline would acquiesce in her political effacement, Lord William Bentinck held her in close observation, with the resolve to seize the first good pretext for dismissing her from the country where she could still cause mischief, though no longer powerful for any purpose of government. If he was looking out for the pretext, it was not long before Maria Caroline played into his hand.

The Sicilians were still rejoicing over the auspicious reformation of their affairs, when Ferdinand appeared unexpectedly at Palermo, and ordered the capital to be placarded with a proclamation, announcing his restoration to health and his consequent intention to resume the authority which he had so recently committed to his son. The proclamation directed the *Te Deum* to be sung in the churches for the recovery of health, which enabled the King to return to his proper place as the father and ruler of his people. In this startling affair, Ferdinand was acting at his wife's instigation.

If he was surprised by the demonstration, which

caused the Palermitans intense excitement, Lord William Bentinck concealed his astonishment and acted with equal self-possession and energy. By the mouth of the Duke of Orleans, who was despatched immediately to Maria Caroline's puppet, the Captain-General informed the King that he would be arrested in his own palace and held accountable for all the consequences of his extravagant manifesto, unless he countermanded the *Te Deum*, withdrew the proclamation, and renewed his promise to adhere with punctilious exactness to his solemn engagements with his subjects and Great Britain. As it was followed instantly by an adequate display of military force, the message had the desired effect. The *Te Deum* was countermanded and the proclamation was withdrawn. But before the time appointed for the King's renewal of his engagements, Ferdinand withdrew to his villa La Favorita, some five miles distant from Palermo, in the hope of avoiding the humiliating forms of a more precise and ceremonious submission. But this retirement to the country failed of its object. The Captain-General, who had threatened to surround the Palermo palace with cannon, deemed it politic to impress the capital by a show of martial force in the grounds of the favourite villa. Not so much designed to influence the King as to overawe the populace, the display of military power, with which Lord William Bentinck closed his conflict with Ferdinand, was well calculated to achieve its main purpose. At the close of the day of Ferdinand's submission the Palermitans, who had

seen an army massed about La Favorita, returned to the capital with a wholesome conviction that the English lord was Lord-Paramount of Sicily.

It cost Lord William Bentinck more time and trouble to get the upper hand of Maria Caroline, who sought to avoid banishment by retreating to the mountains with a guard of peasants, some eight hundred men, armed for the most part with implements of husbandry, whom she maintained for a short time with the money which she had raised by pawning the residue of her jewels. It was not till he had invested her fastness with troops and cannon, so as to leave her no chance of escape and deprive her little force of the means of subsistence, that Maria Theresa's daughter descended from her asylum on the rocky heights, and gave herself into the hands of the victor. Henceforth she lived under espionage and custody till the hour of her departure from the island. Though she was allowed the appearance of liberty and a degree of the pomp befitting her rank, the palace assigned to her for a residence was in truth a prison; and though care was taken to veil the humiliation of her estate she withdrew from Sicily in 1813 under circumstances, that justified the harsh historian of her abasement in describing her as 'sent from the island a prisoner on board an English man-of-war.' Of Lord William Bentinck's part in this painful business it is enough and only fair to say that, whilst he in no particular exceeded the obligations of his duty to Great Britain, he showed every possible care for the feelings of the baffled and broken Queen, whose removal from Sicily was a political necessity.

On leaving Sicily she first sailed to Sardinia, where she made a brief sojourn. Later in the year she was resting at Zante, where she received a last visit of respect from the Marchioness Solari. Eighteen years had passed since the Queen had admitted the marchioness to her presence; and Marie-Antoinette's faithful English attendant must have been painfully struck by the change those eighteen years had wrought in Her Majesty's appearance. Nothing of her whilom famous beauty remained to the worn, pale, attenuated Maria Caroline, with the exception of the beauty of her hands, which retained enough of their loveliness to remind the visitor of Marie-Antoinette's hands. On indicating by a gesture her desire to kneel and offer the customary salute, the Marchioness was repelled and reproved by the quickness with which the fallen Queen withdrew her right hand, as she said, with deep feeling and some asperity, 'No, the ceremony would now be a mockery of royalty, and an insult to my present condition. The daughter of Maria Theresa—a wanderer, an outcast—must no longer receive those marks of distinction, which were the prerogatives of the Queen of Naples. You behold me now in a very different situation to that, in which you first saw me, when you presented me with the letters of my dear murdered sister.'

In the ensuing conversation Maria Caroline spoke with passionate vehemence of the indignities offered to her by Lord William Bentinck, protesting that she had done nothing to justify 'the only foreign nation for which she had a sincere regard in thus insulting her, and what was still worse in ruining her in the

esteem of many of her friends, by calumniating her to all Europe.' Still speaking of Lord William, she remarked fiercely, 'Lord William Bentinck has been grossly imposed upon; if not, he has insulted me from private motives. I never gave him the least cause for so acting. He lent ready credence to everything that was told by my enemies. It is beneath the dignity of a Queen to subject herself to foreign interference.' The next extract from the Marchioness Solari's report of the conversation is the more worthy of notice because it has been misconstrued, as though it countenanced a monstrous invention—perhaps the wildest of all the odious fables about Ferdinand and his Queen.

'I said I always considered Lord William Bentinck to be a most respectable and honourable character, and that possibly Her Majesty had been imposed upon. "Imposed upon!" she replied, "imposed upon! I have been deprived of the government of my own country—of the dignity of my character—of the affection of my husband and children! But *he* has never been a father—*he* has never been a sovereign—and cannot therefore have the feelings of insulted majesty. And then, I am accused of treason, because, forsooth, I wish to recover my just rights as an independent sovereign, a wife and mother."' (*Vide*, 'Venice Under the Yoke,' vol. ii, pp. 73, 74.)

It is obvious that the repeated '*he*' of this passage refers to Lord William Bentinck and not to Ferdinand, who *was* a sovereign, and as a king could have the feelings of insulted majesty. Maria Caroline was not likely to speak of her own husband as never having been a father. Most likely the Marchioness Solari had never heard anything of the scandalous invention which I have designated as 'perhaps the wildest

of all the odious fables about Ferdinand and his queen.' Certainly, if she had heard the monstrous fable, the Marchioness only regarded it as wild scandal; for to the author of 'Venice Under the Yoke,' Maria Caroline was one of the most virtuous queens of modern Europe. The Marchioness was thinking more of Maria Caroline than of any other sovereign when she wrote:

'But there is even a still stronger ground for exculpating her Neapolitan Majesty from the accusation of treason towards her subjects, her country and her husband, and of ingratitude towards the British nation for its active protection, which it seems to be difficult for those to imagine who have not been living all their lives (as I may say) in a sink of vice. It has been my lot twice to have travelled over Europe; and after witnessing the brilliant glitterings of all their courts, I can declare, with the utmost truth and solemnity, that by far the most virtuous inmates of those seats of general corruption have been the sovereigns themselves.' (*Vide*, 'Venice Under the Yoke, &c.,' vol. ii, p. 61.)

It was characteristic of the Queen, who could write leniently of particular rebels a few days after writing bitterly of them, that she did not bid the Marchioness farewell without speaking forgivingly of Lord William Bentinck. In reply to the visitor's expression of a hope that Her Majesty would return to her husband and children in Sicily, Maria Caroline answered, 'Never, never. I shall be one of the few queens who end their days in the place that gave them birth. I pardon Lord William, as I do all my enemies. Not only England, but all Europe, will one day do me justice.'

The speaker of these words could not hope to 'right' herself or to see herself 'righted' in the world's

regard. Conscious of the steady failure of her powers, the Queen, who had no long while since been struck by apoplexy, felt that death's hand covered her. The end would come this year or next. Her sands were running out. No such span of life remained to her as would afford sufficient time for the reconcilements and recoveries of affection and rearrangements, for which she was encouraged to be hopeful. Unlike most queens, she was returning to the old home to die. Forgiving her enemies, she looked to the grave for rest, and to the future for justice.

Living till September 7th, 1814, she lived long enough to see her arch-enemy, Napoleon, fall before such a combination of the powers as would have sufficed in 1792—1793 to crush the French revolution in its infancy, and to save her from the troubles that marred her career, blighted her fame, and spoilt her nature. Having seen the great congress enter on its deliberations at Vienna for the resettlement of Europe, she died at the Castle of Hetzendorf in the night of September 7th, some four months sooner than the date of Emma Hamilton's death at Calais. Troubled in mind by the favour which was just then being shown in the congress to Joachim Murat's claims, the baffled Queen had retired for the night in deep depression, when a period was put to her sorrows. In the morning she was found lifeless, in an attitude that indicated the suddenness of the fatal seizure. Reclining on the chair, she was still pointing with her right hand to the bell-pull, which she was trying to touch at the moment of her last agony, in a vain attempt to summon her attendant. Alone,

without priest, physician, or servant of any kind at her side, Maria Caroline had breathed her last breath.

Persecuting her in death no less vindictively than they persecuted her whilst alive, her enemies lost no time in whispering that she had died of chagrin at learning that the Congress shrunk from the thought of restoring her and her husband to Naples. It was even rumoured that the Emperor of Russia had roundly declared it impossible to place 'the butcher king' again on the throne of Naples, and that a courtier had reported the brutal speech to Her Majesty shortly before her death. Rejoicing over this barbarous tale, the Queen's posthumous defamers have in like manner delighted in exaggerating the signs of disrespect that attended her to the grave. As he could not order ceremonious mourning for her death without appearing to prejudge her husband's claims to re-instalment at Naples, the Emperor of Austria may have been actuated by no discreditable motive in forbearing to accord her the funereal honours due to a queen. To Maria Caroline's defamers it was manifest that in denying her memory the semblance of courtly grief Francis was moved by contempt for her career, and consequent reluctance to diminish the brilliance of his capital by a show of concern for so worthless a woman. Chuckling over the emperor's slight to the memory of so illustrious a princess and so near a kinswoman, Monsieur Gagnière exults over the shortness of the interval between the Queen's death and Ferdinand's morganatic marriage with Lucia Migliaccio—the beautiful and benevolent widow of the Prince of Partanna. It does not occur to

Monsieur Gagnière that, if Ferdinand was guilty of a gross indecorum in marrying the Princess Lucia when no more than fifty days had passed since his queen's death, the show of disrespect was no evidence of Maria Caroline's worthlessness, but was only another indication of her husband's defective sensibility. It is not for me to be Ferdinand's apologist. But in this matter he is less deserving of censure than he may appear to readers, who overlook the circumstances under which he bade his queen a last farewell. His conjugal loneliness dated at least from the hour of Maria Caroline's withdrawal from Sicily under conditions that rendered their re-union alike improbable and undesirable. As a matter of fact it began several months earlier.

Thus Maria Caroline passed from the world at the moment of the restoration of that old order of things, for whose preservation and recovery she had made so many efforts and endured such serious reverses. From the outbreak of the French revolution till overwhelming calamities weakened her mind and ruined her fortunes, she had fought resolutely for the legitimate sovereigns and thrones of Europe. Surviving her beauty and brighter fortunes, she dwindled from impressive power to pitiful weakness, and in the last stage of her journey to the tomb was tortured by the conviction that, in their hour of triumph, the sovereigns would repay her services with neglect.

As she hoped and asked for nothing more than justice from England and Europe, I am not tempted to claim for her a degree of homage, to which she is not strictly entitled. She has not been offered to readers as

a supremely good woman, or an incomparably great princess. I have neither put out of view nor extenuated her failings. Excessive pride and perilous fervour were not the only faults of her despotic spirit and ardent temper. She was too emotional and impetuous for a stateswoman of the highest order. Napoleon put his finger rudely on her most dangerous foible, when he taunted her in the letter of menace with 'treating affairs of state as though they were affairs of the heart.' Though they were unquestionably entitled to respect, her mental powers seem to have been overrated by her admirers. Baron Alquier was not wholly without justification in writing of her, 'On a vanté à tort l'étendue et la supériorité de son esprit, elle ose tout, voilà son secret.' Had her sagacity been attended by corresponding discretion, she would have provoked fewer resentments, and the enemies she was bound to make would have been less implacable. Resembling her sister Marie-Antoinette in the frivolous side of her nature no less than in her person, she was capable of levities that gave a colour of credibility to the slanders on her private life. To govern her husband she was guilty of systematic dissimulation; and he was far from the only person towards whom she was wanting in sincerity. Napoleon had reason for inveighing against her falseness; but, in her perfidies towards the mushroom emperor, she only resembled the other legitimate sovereigns, who one and all laughed at the notion of keeping faith with the arch-impostor.

Against these failings must be set an impressive

array of noble qualities. No less steady in her friendships than tenacious of her purposes, Maria Caroline was at all times placable to her personal enemies, and rich in most of the higher womanly virtues. From 1768 till the outbreak of the great revolution, she was a bright example of queenly beneficence; and to a much later time she was commendable, even in General Colletta's opinion, for justice and humanity. Had she been a woman of the very highest order, she would not have been so irrecoverably disturbed and dwarfed in her moral nature by the terrors of the great revolution. But during her long and steady deterioration she never survived her devotional sensibility, nor did she ever become the fiercely cruel despot that history has declared her. Temperate in every personal indulgence but opium, she was wholly guiltless of the ignoble vices, attributed to her by vulgar rumour and unscrupulous defamers. There is much in her true story to compassionate as well as much to admire. It covers much on which her descendants may well meditate with sadness, but nothing for them to remember with shame.

EVIDENCE AND CONTROVERSY.

CHAPTER I.

EVIDENCE OF HORATIA'S PARENTAGE.

Lady Hamilton's Place of Abode—Her State of Health—Mystifications of the Thomson-Letters—Failure of the Mystifications—Identity of Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton—Identity of Nelson and Thomson—Three Sources of Evidence of Horatia's Birth-Time—The 'Now, my own dear Wife,' Letter—Nelson declares himself Horatia's Father—Persistence in Mystification—Falsification of a Marylebone Register—Lady Hamilton declares herself Horatia's Mother—Her avowals of the Fact to Nelson—Her avowal of the Truth *to* Horatia—Her vile Slander on Maria Caroline—Summary of Evidence—Thomas Allen's disproved Story—Sir Thomas Hardy's disproved Story—Mrs. Ward's 'Case' respecting her own Maternal Parentage—Chief Particulars of her strong *primâ-facie* 'Case'—Horatia's baptismal Registration—Lady Hamilton's Letters to Nurse Gibson—Mrs. Johnstone's 'Statement'—'Letters of Lord Nelson to Lady Hamilton (1814)'—Mr. Haslewood's Evidence and Ignorance—Rev. Dr. Scott's Evidence and Ignorance—Mrs. Ward's other Evidences—Demolition of Mrs. Ward's 'Case'—Mr. Paget's *Ifs* and *Ands*—Conclusion of Controversy.

It being necessary for my vindication of Maria Caroline that the readers of this book should close it without even the shadow of a doubt respecting Horatia Nelson's maternal parentage, I now return to a subject about which I thought I should never be required to write another line, after discussing

so fully 'Mr. Laughton's Remarks on Questions touching Horatia's Parentage' in the appendix to 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.'

On giving their attention to the ensuing summary of the evidences of Horatia's parentage, students should dismiss from their minds all respect for Sir Harris Nicolas's opinion that Horatia was *not* Lady Hamilton's daughter, because at the time of giving that opinion the able editor of Nelson's 'Dispatches and Letters' had never had an opportunity of examining the larger and far weightier part of the conclusive testimony, that Emma Hamilton was Horatia's mother. Though he ought to have come to the opposite opinion from the evidence under his consideration, Sir Harris Nicolas was not without excuse for coming to an erroneous conclusion from the smaller and lighter part of the evidence. But nothing could be urged in palliation of his erroneous judgment, had he, at the time of delivering it, seen the papers which determined Dr. Pettigrew's judgment on the question. Had so sagacious and honest a man seen Dr. Pettigrew's Thomson-letters, and the 'Now, my own dear Wife,' letter when he was approached by Mr. Haslewood and Mrs. Ward, in 1846, he would have laughed at the worthy old lawyer's affectation of having been Nelson's peculiarly confidential friend, and in his kindest and most sympathetic manner would have urged Mrs. Ward to reconcile herself to the thought of being Lady Hamilton's daughter, as the evidence was conclusive that she was no other woman's offspring.

Students should also dismiss from their minds the

notion that Nelson's attachment to Lady Hamilton was, at any time subsequent to their return to England, a platonic friendship. Whilst writing the later chapters of 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' *vide*, vol. ii, p. 296, I was disposed 'to think it upon the whole less probable, that the habitually truthful Nelson was wholly untruthful on this particular business (to his *father* as well as other people), than that the incident, which resulted in Horatia's birth, was a never-repeated incident, and that, apart from the one incident, the intimacy *was* platonic, *i.e.* (to use Sir Harris Nicolas's expression) *was not* 'in the usual sense of the word of a criminal nature.' But careful study of the large body of Mr. Alfred Morrison's recently acquired Nelson-Hamilton MSS. has taught me that I erred in taking this view of an intimacy, which would have differed in no respect from other *liaisons* of a distinctly non-platonic kind, had it not been for the exceptional fervour and vehemence of the Admiral's thoroughly masculine passion for the woman, who fascinated him. After giving birth in January, 1801, to Horatia, whom Nelson certainly regarded as his child by her, Lady Hamilton became the mother of another girl,—another 'little Emma,'—whom Nelson no less certainly regarded as his child by her. Born at the turn of the year 1803-4, this second 'little Emma' died in March, 1804.

Leaving London for Plymouth on the 13th January, 1801, after paying his wife a formal farewell visit, Nelson went to the coast only a few days before the birth of Horatia, which occurred no earlier than the 29th, and no later than the 31st of that month.

Within eight days of his departure from London, he and Lady Hamilton were exchanging confidential letters, that make mention of Mrs. Thomson in London and her particular friend (styled in the letters 'T.,' 'Thomson,' and 'Mrs. Thomson's friend'). For example on 21st January, 1801, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton, 'I sincerely hope that your very serious cold will soon be better. I am so much interested in your health and happiness, that pray tell me all. I delivered to Mr. —— Mrs. Thomson's message and note; he desires me, poor fellow, to say, he is more scrupulous than if Mrs. T. was present. He says he does not write letters at this moment, as the object of his affections may be unwell and others may open them.' On 24th January, 1801, and on each of the five following days, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton, and in each of the six letters sent a message from Mrs. Thomson's 'friend' to Mrs. Thomson,—a series of messages, showing that Mrs. T.'s friend was very anxious about her health. For evidence, in support of these statements, I refer the reader to the extracts from the series of letters, given in his 'Life of Nelson,' vol. ii, pp. 645, 646, by Dr. Pettigrew, the authenticity of whose Thomson-letters has been placed beyond suspicion by Mr. Morrison's recent acquisition of all the more important of the extant Nelson-Thomson writings.

(1) *Evidence touching Lady Hamilton's Place of Abode at the time of Horatia's birth.* That Lady Hamilton was at her usual place of abode, No. 23, Piccadilly, the house into which she and her husband had recently moved on withdrawing from Mr. Beckford's house in Grosvenor Square, is indicated by the fact

that Nelson addressed his letters to her at that place up to and immediately after the time of Horatia's birth. In one of these letters (*vide*, Pettigrew's 'Life of Nelson,' vol. i, p. 421) Nelson, dating from the *San Josef* on 2nd February, 1801, says, 'I rejoice to hear you say you are better; only recollect the old nurse's advice, "Nurse a cold, starve a fever"; therefore pray be sure and nurse yourself. If I was Sir William you should not get out of bed for a week, nor out of the house for a fortnight,'—words which at least indicate that the writer had reason to think that Sir William was at home, and that Lady Hamilton's letter of Saturday (31st January, 1801) had been penned from the house, to which the reply was addressed. Had I taken note of these words of Nelson's 2nd February letter, when I was writing p. 221, vol. ii, of 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.' I should not have spoken of Horatia's birth as 'seeming from uncertain testimony to have occurred at No. 23, Piccadilly.' It may be taken for certain that Lady Hamilton was at No. 23, Piccadilly, at the time of her clandestine accouchement.

(2) *Evidence (apart from evidence of the accouchement) touching Lady Hamilton's state of health about the time of Horatia's birth.* (*a*) From a part of the already given extract from the letter, written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton on 21st January, 1801, it appears that, some week or ten days before Horatia's birth, Lady Hamilton was still either suffering or pretending to suffer from a very serious cold. Nelson's words to the invalid are, 'I sincerely hope that your very serious cold will soon be better. I am so much

interested in your health and happiness, that pray tell me all.'—(*b*) That Lady Hamilton was, ten days later, still suffering or feigning to suffer from her very serious cold, and actually keeping her bed from the alleged 'very serious cold' or some other cause of indisposition, appears from words, in which Nelson on 2nd of February, replied to her letter of 31st January, 1801. 'I have this moment,' says Nelson, 'received your letter of Saturday, and my brother is sorry you have not been well, but thanks you for having sent for Charlotte. I rejoice to hear you say you are better; only recollect the old nurse's advice, "Nurse a cold, starve a fever;" therefore pray be sure and nurse yourself. If I was Sir William you should not get out of bed for a week, nor out of the house for a fortnight. You ought to follow my advice, as you know how exactly I follow yours when I am sick.'—(*c*) That, some eight or ten days after the birth of Horatia, Mr. Davison was struck by a change in Lady Hamilton's figure and aspect, appears from a passage of one of Nelson's letters to Lady Hamilton. 'Mr. Davison,' the Admiral wrote to Lady Hamilton on Saturday, 7th February, 1801, 'came while I was at dinner yesterday and gave me your letter. He says you are grown thinner, but he thinks you look handsomer than ever.' Had she suffered only from a cold, which she 'nursed' and did not 'starve,' she would scarcely have grown so much thinner. Anyhow, the evidence is sufficient that, for some days before and for a few days after Horatia's birth, Lady Hamilton kept to her bed at No. 23, Piccadilly, because she was unwell.

(3) *The Mystification of the Thomson Correspondence.* To preserve the secret of their *liaison*, and the secret of Horatia's birth, in case one or more of the letters, in which they wrote to one another of their mutual affection and their child, should come under Sir William Hamilton's observation or fall into the hands of any person likely to divulge its contents, Nelson and Lady Hamilton employed a simple process of mystification, that has been used by countless lovers, and is used by countless lovers at the present time. Addressing letters to Lady Hamilton as though she bore the name and style of Mrs. Thomson, Nelson also addressed letters to her by her proper designation, in which she received intelligence respecting Mr. T., and was enjoined to give enclosed messages to her friend Mrs. Thomson from Mrs. T.'s particular friend. The letters, thus addressed to Mrs. Thomson (under cover of addresses to Lady Hamilton, No. 23, Piccadilly) read like letters from her affectionate husband, or from a man who was resolved to seize the first occasion for making her his wife. The messages, which Lady Hamilton was directed by Nelson to transmit to Mrs. Thomson, were such messages as a sailor, who had reasons for not using his pen, might be expected to send from sea through a confidential hand, to the woman on shore, with whom he had a secret *liaison*. On receiving a letter, addressed to Mrs. Thomson by Nelson, Lady Hamilton dealt with it as a letter to herself. In like manner, the messages, which she was enjoined to pass on to Mrs. Thomson, were regarded by Lady Hamilton as messages, which she was required to take to her-

self. Two other mystifying words were used in this correspondence. In a letter, written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton, whether she was addressed as Lady Hamilton or Mrs. Thomson, 'your "uncle"' meant 'your "husband,"' and my 'aunt' or his (Mr. T.'s) 'aunt' meant Lady Nelson. These Thomson-letters cover three years and nine months; but in the present essay those of the letters that were written about the time of Horatia's birth, and during the six or eight weeks following that event, are chiefly under the present writer's consideration. Let it be borne in mind by readers that the weeks, immediately following Horatia's birth, were the time of Nelson's violent jealousy of the Prince of Wales, and of his indignation at the pressure Sir William Hamilton was putting —or, at least, seemed to Nelson to be putting—on Lady Hamilton, in order to make her treat the Prince civilly. It should also be borne in the reader's mind, that, as Nelson was careful to destroy all the Thomson-letters written to him by Lady Hamilton, the evidence, afforded by extant Thomson-letters respecting Horatia's birth and infancy, comes to us from Thomson-letters written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton, and the Thomson-letters (*vide*, Sir Harris Nicolas's 'Dispatches and Letters,' vol. vii, pp. 371 to 381) written by Lady Hamilton to Nurse Gibson.

(4) *Failure of the Mystification.* With respect to the majority of the Thomson-letters, addressed by Nelson to Lady Hamilton, it may be observed that each of them is so far mystified, that it would not by itself have revealed any of 'the secrets' of the correspondence to an ordinary reader. So much can

scarcely be said of a small minority of the epistles. For example, the letter, written by Nelson with his own hand to Mrs. Thomson and signed 'T.,' reveals at least one of the most important of the secrets. But now that the principal documents have been brought together, every one of the secrets is discoverable to the intelligent scrutinizer of the mystified writings.

(*a*) *Identity of Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton.* To examine the collected Thomson-letters and then to deny the identity of Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton is to believe, that those names pertained respectively to two intimate female friends, each of whom was passionately loved by Nelson in the earlier months of 1801, that each of them in the February of that year was the object of the Prince of Wales's gallantry, that each of them had 'an uncle' set on compelling them to receive the Prince with a show of complaisance, that each of them was living under the roof of her unkind uncle, and was on the point of determining to fly from her uncle's house, should he persist in urging them to treat the Prince of Wales civilly, and that each of them had an admirer in the same ship of the royal navy, who, though he could not marry out of hand, was ready to dare the world's opinion and take her at once under his protection, should her cruel 'uncle' persist in his barbarous and insulting action.

(*b*) *Identity of Nelson and Thomson.* To examine and compare the collected Thomson-letters and still to imagine that Nelson and Thomson were two different men and that Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton

were two different women, the personal historian must believe that Nelson had on board his ship a friend who in the earlier months of 1801 resembled him—*in* being passionately attached to a woman who had just given him a child, and whom he could not marry immediately but was set on marrying on the first disappearance of the obstacles to their union,—*in* being furiously jealous of the Prince of Wales,—*in* being set on getting leave of absence from his ship,—and *in* being greatly indignant with his sweetheart's uncle for requiring her to respond courteously to the Prince's addresses.

(*c*) *Another Aspect of the Affair.* To admit (by the light now thrown on the Thomson-letters by Mr. Morrison's recent acquisition of the most important of them) that Nelson and Thomson were the same person, and still to think that Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton were two different women, the student must be capable of believing that, besides loving both women at the same time, Nelson was capable of trying to conciliate each of the two intimate female friends, by telling her that he admired and loved the other.

(5) *Evidence of the Thomson-Letters touching Horatia's parentage.* It being no longer an open question, but a matter of certainty, that Lady Hamilton and Mrs. Thomson were the same person, and that Nelson and Mr. Thomson were the same man, let it be shown what the Thomson-letters tell of Horatia's parentage. For this demonstration a few passages of Dr. Pettigrew's judiciously chosen extracts from these letters are all-sufficient.

(*a*) *Time of Horatia's birth.* That Lady Hamilton, as a nominal sufferer from a very serious cold, kept to her bed in the last days of January, 1801, and in the earlier days of the following month, readers have already learned. She was thus nursing her very serious cold when Nelson, on the 29th of January, wrote to her from Plymouth, 'Pray, tell your friend, Mrs. T., that I have delivered her note to her friend, and he desires me to say, through your goodness, how sensible he is of her kindness . . . . . *May the great God of Heaven protect, comfort and assist you, is the present wish of, my dear Lady*, ever your affectionate friend,—Nelson and Bronté.' Observe the earnestness of the words which I have caused to be printed in italics. Nelson would scarcely have written to Lady Hamilton in this strain, had her illness been to his knowledge nothing more than a bad cold—a cold to be nursed, *not* starved. Why was he thus earnestly prayerful that the great God of Heaven would protect and assist the invalid? Three days later (1st of February, 1801), Nelson, addressing to her at No. 23, Piccadilly, wrote to Lady Hamilton, 'My dear Lady, I believe poor dear Mrs. Thomson's friend' (to wit, Nelson himself) 'will go mad with joy. He cries, prays, performs all tricks, yet dare not shew all or any of his feelings. He has only me to consult with. He swears he will drink your health this day in a bumper; and d——n me, if I don't join him, in spite of all the doctors in Europe.' The writer's elation shows him to have received some extremely good news. On the morrow (2nd of February, 1801), after writing

much in the same happy strain of exultation, he adds, 'That friend of our dear Mrs. T. is a good soul and full of feeling. He wishes much to see her and her little one. If possible, I shall get him leave for two or three days when I go to Portsmouth, and you will see his gratitude.' The next day (3rd of February), Nelson sent to No. 23, Piccadilly, 'My dear Mrs. Thomson, your good and dear friend . . . . charges me to say how dear you are to him, and that you must [ ] every opportunity kiss and bless for him his dear little girl, which he wishes to be called Emma out of gratitude to our dear good Lady Hamilton . . . . I (*sic*) have given Lord N. a hundred pounds this morning, for which he (*sic*) will give Lady H. an order on his agents; and I (*sic*) beg that you will distribute it amongst those who have been useful to you on the late occasion.' Observe the writer's confusion. In a letter, written with his own pen and signed with his own name, Nelson says, 'I have given Lord N[elson] a hundred pounds,' &c., when he should have written,' *He* has given *me* a hundred pounds this morning, for which *I* will give Lady H. an order on *my* agents; and *he* begs that you will distribute,' &c. On the 5th of February, 1801, Nelson sent Lady Hamilton the draft of a will he (Nelson) had just made in her favour, and for the contingent advantage of 'any child she may have, in or out of wedlock, or any child, male or female, which she, the said Emma Hamilton, wife of the Right Honourable Sir William Hamilton, may choose to adopt and call her child.' And on this same day

(5th of February), he wrote to Lady Hamilton, addressing her as Mrs. Thomson:

'My dear Mrs. Thomson,—Your dear and excellent friend has desired me to say that it is not usual to christen children till they are a month or six weeks old, and as Lord Nelson will probably be in town as well as myself, before we go to the Baltic, he proposes then, if you approve, to christen the child, and that myself and Lady Hamilton should be two of the sponsors. It can be christened at St. George's, Hanover square, and, I believe, the parents being at the time out of the kingdom, if it is necessary, it can be stated born at Portsmouth or the sea. *Its name will be Horatia, daughter of Johem and Morata Etnorb.* If you read the surname backwards, and take the letters of the other names, it will make, very extraordinary, the names of your real and affectionate friends Lady Hamilton and myself; but, my dear friend, consult Lady Hamilton. Your friend consults me, and I would not lead him wrong for the world; he has not been very well; I believe he has fretted, but his spirit is too high to own it. But, my dear Madam, both him, you, and your little one, must always believe me your affectionate—Nelson and Bronte.

'The child, if you like it, can be named by any clergyman without its going to church.'

This letter is published in full, as a good example of the mystified Thomson-letters. Affording a good specimen of Nelson's literary inaptitude for an artful kind of composition, and an indication of the lengths he could go in the way of pure fiction, in order to mislead people respecting Horatia's parentage; it also yields a distinct avowal that the newly-born infant was the offspring of the writer and Lady Hamilton. In a letter, written for the most part in the first person and signed 'Your affectionate Nelson and Bronté,' Nelson says, 'As Lord Nelson will probably be in town as well as myself, before we go

to the Baltic, he proposes then, if you approve, to christen the child, and that myself and Lady Hamilton should be two of the sponsors.' Though the child's parents were both in England, one of them at No. 23, Piccadilly, and one in Plymouth water, he instructs Lady Hamilton (under her assumed name of Mrs. Thomson) to represent at the christening that the child was born out of the kingdom, so that it should be registered as born at Portsmouth or at sea. He goes on to say, 'Its name will be Horatia, daughter of Johem and Morata Etnorb'—daughter of Horatio and Emma Bronté. There is no doubt as to the authenticity of this letter, long since printed in Pettigrew's book, and now resting amongst the Morrison MSS.

Whilst the mystified, but no longer obscure, letters which Dr. Pettigrew first gave to the world, afford so much information respecting Horatia's birth, another set of the Thomson-letters, *i.e.*, the Thomson-letters written by Lady Hamilton to Nurse Gibson, of No. 9, Little Titchfield Street, Marylebone, that were published by Sir Harris Nicolas, yield notable information respecting the time spent by the child under Nurse Gibson's care. In a note, bearing the post-mark '7 o'clock, 7 February, 1801,' Lady Hamilton wrote to Nurse Gibson, 'Dear Madam,—My cold has been so bad, I could not go out to-day, but to-morrow will call on you. Write me by the penny-post how the dear little Miss Horatia is. Ever your sincere friend—E. H.' Consequently Horatia, born not earlier than the 29th of January, and no later than the 31st of January, 1801, was certainly under

Nurse Gibson's care on the 7th of February, 1801.

In connection with this evidence to the approximate date of 'little Horatia's' consignment to her nurse's care, notice should be here taken of the testimony given in 1828 by Mrs. Johnstone (Nurse Gibson's most respectable daughter) with respect to the infant's arrival at, and residence under, her mother's roof. In 1828, Mrs. Johnstone, who used to act as assistant nursemaid to little Horatia, made this statement (*vide*, Sir Harris Nicolas's 'Dispatches and Letters,' vol. vii, p. 370):

'Lady Hamilton brought the child to her mother's house in a hackney-coach one night, and placed her under her charge, telling her that she should be handsomely remunerated. She was unattended, and did not give the nurse any information as to the child's parents. The nurse declared she was no more than eight days old. This was either in the month of January or February; and Mrs. Gibson said she never could make out why her birthday was kept in October. She remained with the nurse till she was five or six years old. Lady Hamilton constantly visited her. Lord Nelson was frequently her companion in her visits to her, and often came alone, and played for hours with the infant on the floor, *calling her his own child.*'

The concluding five words of Mrs. Johnstone I have printed in italics, to call attention to their testimony that Nelson used to call Horatia 'his own child.'

Nelson and Mr. Thomson being the same person, the Thomson-letters, written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton in the weeks immediately following Horatia's birth, abound with statements by him to Lady Hamilton that they were the child's parents. One of the same letters contains a distinct statement by him that

Horatia was the daughter of Horatio and Emma Bronté.

(6) *Concurrence of testimony respecting Horatia's age at the time of her arrival at Mrs. Gibson's house.* As the Thomson-letters afford conclusive testimony in Nelson's own handwriting that Horatia was born between the 29th and 31st (inclusive) of January, 1801, Nelson is himself a witness that on February 7th, when she was already in Nurse Gibson's keeping, Horatia was no more than eight days old, even if she were born on the earliest of the three approximate days of her birth. Lady Hamilton's first extant and already quoted Thomson-letter shows that Horatia was, and had been for some hours (probably for an entire day, possibly for longer), in Nurse Gibson's keeping on February 7th, 1801. Mrs. Johnstone's statement affords evidence that Nurse Gibson declared that, on first coming to her hands, Horatia 'was no more than eight days old,' —a fact to which the nurse was peculiarly competent to speak. Consequently, we have *three* separate and independent sources of evidence that Horatia was no more than eight days old on her arrival at Nurse Gibson's, and therefore could not have been a child born of Maria Caroline in Sicily.

(7) *Evidence of the 'Now, my own dear wife' Letter.* On March 1st, 1801, in a letter wholly devoid of Thomsonian mystification, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton these words, just as they appear in Pettigrew's 'Life,' vol. ii, p. 652:

'Now, my own dear Wife, for such you are in my eyes and in the face of heaven, I can give full scope to my feelings, for I dare say Oliver will faithfully deliver this letter. You

know, my dearest Emma, that there is nothing in this world that I would not do for us to live together, and to have our dear little child with us . . . . I love, never did love anyone else. I never had a dear pledge of love till you gave me one, and you, thank my God, never gave one to anybody else. I think before March is out you will either see us back, or so victorious that we shall insure a glorious issue to our toils. Think what my Emma will feel at seeing return safe perhaps with a little more fame, her own dear loving Nelson.' In a postscript to the letter (signed 'N[elson] and B[ronté]'), which contains these remarkable words, Nelson added on 2nd March, 'Kiss and bless *our* dear Horatia,—think of that.'

When these words of momentous avowal were published in Dr. Pettigrew's 'Life of Nelson,' the unscrupulous maligners of an honest biographer went about saying that the words were taken by Pettigrew from a forged letter, and that he had published the words as authentic, whilst knowing the letter to be a forgery. And the slanderers did their work so successfully that from the year in which Pettigrew's book was published even to yesterday cautious writers about Nelson have hesitated to use the words as authentic. Speaking of this letter in the preface to his able abridgement of Nelson's 'Dispatches and Letters,' Professor Laughton remarked, 'One letter, indeed, given by Pettigrew (vol. ii, p. 652) would be conclusive, if its authenticity were established . . . . At present it rests merely on Pettigrew's statement; and Pettigrew was far from an exacting critic.' That I had perfect faith in the authenticity of the letter I showed last year by quoting the words in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' and by combating Professor Laughton's opinion that the matter of the

letter was 'too widely different from anything else either Nelson or Lady Hamilton wrote to permit its acceptance without a close scrutiny.' But further than this I could not go before the original letter had come to light and found a resting-place in the Morrison MSS. Since this decisive letter has been in Mr. Morrison's hands, it has been carefully examined by several persons well qualified to speak authoritatively of its genuineness, one of them being a record-expert, who would have been glad to find the letter spurious. This epistle, to whose discredit so much has been written by persons who had never seen it, is incontestably genuine. No more authentic letter by a famous man exists in the kingdom. Professor Laughton's doubts are therefore at an end. The letter, which he admitted 'would be conclusive if its authenticity were established' has been recovered to students since I wrote 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' and on the severest and nicest scrutiny it has been found a document of whose authenticity there cannot be even the faintest suspicion.

(8) *Nelson's Assurances to Horatia that she was his Daughter.* That from her earliest infancy to the close of his own career Nelson never wavered in regarding Horatia as his offspring, that he cared with paternal fondness for her nurture, that he made provision for her future maintenance, and that he in every way discharged the functions of a parent to her, are facts alike notorious and indisputable. If any readers of this page require evidence of these particulars of Nelson's conduct to the child, they may find it in the appendix to 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.' But

it is well to remind the peruser of this chapter of certain occasions, when the Admiral gave his solemn word to the child that she was his daughter. On October 21st, 1803, he wrote 'off Toulon' the letter, beginning with 'My dear Child,—Receive this first letter from your most affectionate Father,' and closing with, 'And be assured that I am, my dearest Horatia, your most affectionate Father—Nelson and Bronte.' Two years later (October 19th, 1805) he wrote from the *Victory* to the child another letter, which he opened by styling her his 'dearest angel,' and closed with this solemn benediction, 'Receive, my dearest Horatia, the affectionate Parental Blessing of your Father—Nelson and Bronte.' Nelson's motive in addressing these letters to so young a child, who used to address him and speak of him as 'god-papa,' must have been a desire to leave behind him, in case he should die during her infancy, written words that, on coming under her consideration when she should have survived childhood, would enlighten her as to his real relation to her, and be an assurance to her that she was his daughter in the most literal sense of the word.

(9) *Persistence in Mystification.* Whilst discharging all the duties of a father to her, Nelson persisted in using mystification, in order to blind his friends, his acquaintances and the world to the nature of his intercourse with the child's mother. Though growing less and less frequent as time went on, mystifying messages and references to Mrs. Thomson appear in letters written by him to Lady Hamilton, after little Horatia was able to run about and prattle merrily.

His boldest stroke for misleading the world about Horatia's birth was made on 13th May, 1803, when little Horatia was christened at Marylebone Church under circumstances that caused this false entry to be made in the register of baptisms for 1803:

Baptisms, 1803,
May 13—Horatia Nelson Thompson,
B. 29 October, 1800.

In causing this false registration to be made in a book of public record, Nelson, who probably gave Emma Hamilton credit for having destroyed his Thomson-letters to her as carefully as he had destroyed her Thomson-letters to himself, was under the impression that he was fabricating a piece of spurious evidence, which could not fail to mislead the world respecting the date of his daughter's birth. But, as matters have turned out, he was only creating evidence of the length he could go in misrepresentation, in order to conceal a fact whose disclosure would be hurtful to Lady Hamilton's far from flawless reputation. Ten days later (22nd May, 1803), as he was sailing for the Mediterranean, to take command of the fleet, he wrote to Lady Hamilton:

'I look at your, and my god-child's picture, but till I am sure of remaining here, I cannot bring myself to hang them up. Be assured that my attachment and affectionate regard is unalterable: nothing can shake it. And pray say so to dear Mrs. T., when you see her. Tell her, that my love is unbounded to her, and her dear sweet child; and if she should have more, it will extend to all of them, In short, my dear Emma, say everything to her, which your dear affectionate heart can think of . . . Tell Mrs. T. that I will write to her the first safe opportunity.'

Though he had seen neither the majority nor the most important of the Thomson-letters written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton, nor the conclusive 'Now, my own dear Wife' letter, Sir Harris Nicolas, the first publisher of Mrs. Johnstone's 'Statement' and of Lady Hamilton's Thomson-letters to Nurse Gibson, was not likely to be imposed upon by the false baptismal registration. 'The date assigned to her,' (*i.e.*, Horatia's) 'birth,' says Sir Harris, *vide*, 'Dispatches and Letters,' vol. vii, p. 370, 'in the register of her baptism, viz., the 29th of October, 1800, must have been purposely misstated, the reason for which has not been discovered.' By the light of recently discovered documents, it is not difficult to see the reason of the misstatement.

On the 6th April, 1803, the day of Sir William Hamilton's death, there remained only one obstacle to Nelson's marriage with Lady Hamilton. That one obstacle might soon disappear through Lady Nelson's death or through her successful suit for a divorce. It is only fair to Nelson to assume that he was thinking more of the divorce than of the possibility of his wife's death, when he wrote to Lady Hamilton in 1805, 'We will look forward to many, many happy years and be[ing] surrounded by our children's children. God Almighty can, when he pleases, remove the impediment.' Anyhow, from the hour of Sir William Hamilton's death there was only one impediment to the lawful union for which the Admiral and the adventuress were alike yearning. In anticipation of the disappearance of this one impediment, Nelson and Emma were in May, 1803,

laying plans to be carried out when, after the disappearance of the solitary obstacle, they should have become man and wife. It was obvious to them that, even if they should be so fortunate as to be married in the course of the next two years, they could not offer Horatia (already two years and three months old) to the notice of society as their offspring born in wedlock. However dear to them as their own child, she must figure to the world as an orphan whom they had adopted. Just five months before Sir William Hamilton's death, some disagreeable gossip about the child (though still under Nurse Gibson's charge in Little Titchfield Street, Marylebone) had caused Nelson to write with his own hand this note (post-marked, '19th November, 1802') to the nurse, 'Mrs. Gibson is desired on no consideration to answer any questions about Miss Thompson (*sic*), nor who placed her with Mrs. G., as ill-tempered people have talked lies about the child.' To account in a manner creditable to Lady Hamilton's wifely honour, for the child's appearance in the family-circle, when she should be taken to Merton 'for good,' it was necessary that the child should be registered under a name, that would accord with the story her parents meant to tell of her. To baffle the prying gossip-mongers, who knew something of the child's life in Little Titchfield Street and probably the date of her consignment to Nurse Gibson, and to counteract at least one of the 'lies' they had talked about her, Nelson and Emma decided that Horatia's birth should be ante-dated in the Marylebone register.

They probably selected 29th October, for the day

of the birth, because it was a day of the time, when Lady Hamilton was well before the world at Hamburg, in the full swim of hilarious society, with Miss Cornelia Knight at her side. Whilst there were witnesses to the fact that the adventuress was keeping her bed (under pretext of a serious cold) at the real time of Horatia's birth, there were scores of witnesses to certify, that she *could not* have suffered from an accouchement on the 29th October, 1800.

In accordance with the false date, Nelson and Emma henceforth talked of the child as three months older than she really was. The child's birthday was kept on the 29th October. On bringing the child to Merton, Lady Hamilton spoke of her as an orphan, whom Nelson had befriended from motives of generosity and affection, and of whose existence she was cognizant from a day following closely her return to England in 1800. Moreover, she was in a position to show her friends, and she did show some of them, by evidence not to be gainsaid, that she had Nelson's authority for saying that Horatia was an orphan, who had been thrown upon his hands under most singular circumstances,—that he was deeply sensible of her kindness in befriending the orphan and finding a suitable nurse for her in her earliest infancy,—and further that she had been induced to take the child to her own hearth by his earnest entreaty, that she would be good enough to do so.

As she was baptized, at Marylebone Church, under the name of Horatia Nelson Thomson, and was so styled in the famous so-called codicil, *as* Nelson and Lady Hamilton were both in the habit of declar-

ing her an orphan to their acquaintances, and *as* both parents combined to impose her on their Merton friends in the character of an orphan whom they were befriending, it is not wonderful that many people persisted to the last in thinking Horatia no child of either of her real parents, and that a greater number of people resembled Sir Harris Nicolas in regarding Nelson as the child's father, but acquitting Lady Hamilton of being the child's mother. The marvel is that, from first to last, so many people laughed at the statements and stories and other artifices, which were so steadily employed for keeping the child's parentage a mystery.

(10) *Evidence of Lady Hamilton's Acknowledgments that she was Horatia's mother.* Lady Hamilton is so generally believed to have uniformly and invariably denied she was Horatia's mother, that many readers will learn with surprise that the adventuress left behind her letters written by herself, in which she acknowledged herself to be the child's maternal parent. Lady Hamilton told countless untruths on this subject. To guard her character from the imputation of having been a faithless wife, she persisted in telling the multitude of her acquaintances that Horatia was an orphan. Her usual story to this multitude during Nelson's life implied that neither of Horatia's parents were living. But after Nelson's death she told at least some few persons that he was Horatia's father, whilst holding to her old fiction about the child's parentage on the maternal side, —to wit, that Horatia's mother was a gentlewoman of high birth. 'Lady Hamilton,' writes Sir Harris

Nicolas, 'always said that the child's mother was a person of high birth.' On one occasion she went further, and, telling the vile lie against Maria Caroline, wrote (in description of a silver-gilt cup, which she appears to have re-sold to Mr. Slater, a silversmith of the Strand, at the time of writing the paper),

> 'The Victor of Aboukir, Copenhagen and Trafalgar, &c. &c. &c., the glorious, the great, and good Nelson, bought this for his daughter Horatia Nelson, August 30th, 1805. She used it till I thought it proper for her to lay it by as a sacred relic.—EMMA HAMILTON.
>
> 'She is the daughter, the true and beloved daughter of Viscount Nelson, and if he had lived, she would have been all that his love and fortune could have made her; for nature has made her perfect, beautiful, good, and amiable. Her Mother Was Too Great To Be Mentioned, but her father, mother, and Horatia had a true and virtuous friend in Emma Hamilton.'

There were, however, two persons to whom Emma Hamilton avowed in distinct terms that she was Horatia's mother. One of these persons was Nelson. The other person was Horatia herself.

(*a*) *Lady Hamilton's Avowals made to Nelson.* Now that we know all about the mystifications in the Thomson-letters, written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton, those epistles are seen to overflow with evidence that Horatia was commended to Nelson by Lady Hamilton as a child born to him by herself. There is no longer any uncertainty as to the genuineness of the 'Now, my own dear Wife' letter, written on the 1st of March, 1801, by Nelson to Lady Hamilton. That unquestionably authentic letter affords conclusive evidence that Emma Hamilton not only

assured Nelson that the child was her offspring by him, but also was the only child she had ever given to any man. The letters written by Nelson to Emma Hamilton soon after Horatia's birth abound with evidence that her side of the correspondence was based on avowals, that the child was his issue and her issue. Though Emma Hamilton's side of the correspondence has perished, through Nelson's care to destroy the letters which might disclose her and his secret, much of the contents of the destroyed epistles appears from what we possess of his side of the correspondence.

Declaring herself Horatia's mother in the letters which no longer exist, Emma Hamilton spoke of herself and Nelson as the child's parents in at least two of the few extant examples of the way in which she used to write to him when he was at sea. Dating from Canterbury on the 4th of October, 1805, when the Admiral had taken his last view of the English cliffs, Lady Hamilton wrote to Nelson, 'I send you a letter of Miss Conner's' (Horatia's governess) 'as their is much in it [about] our dear girl. You will like it. I allsoe had one from my mother, who doats on her. She says she could not live without her. What a blessing for her parents to have such a child, so sweet altho' so young, so amiable. God spare her to them.—Amen. Be assured my life, my soul, of your own Emma's fondest affections.' The 'parents' referred to in this passage must have been the writer and the person to whom she was writing. They were the two individuals who, as parents, had reason to congratulate them-

selves on having such a blessing as Horatia. Four days later (8th of October, 1805), in a letter which the Admiral did not live to open, Lady Hamilton wrote, from Canterbury, to Nelson, 'My dear girl writes every day in Miss Conner's letter, and I am so pleased with her. My heart is broke being from her, but I have now had her so long at Merton, my heart will not bear to be without her. You will be even fonder of her, when you return. She says "I love dear dear god-papa, but Mrs. Gibson told me he killed all the people, and I was affraid." Dearest angel, she is! Oh, Nelson! how I love her, but I idolise you, my dearest husband of my heart! You are all in this world to your Emma.'

(*b*) *Lady Hamilton declares herself the child's Mother to Horatia.* On the 13th of April, 1813, when Horatia was in disgrace with Lady Hamilton, the young lady (*ætat* twelve) received the scolding letter, printed at large in a previous part of this work, in which she was addressed by Nelson's enchantress in the following strain:

'Listen to a kind good mother, who has ever been to you affectionate [and] truly kind, and who has neither spared pains nor expense to make you the most amiable and accomplished of your sex . . . . . But these frequent blows have killed me. Listen then from a mother who speaks from the dead. Reform your conduct, or you will be detested by all the world, and when you shall no longer have my protecting care to shield you, whoe betide you, for you will sink to nothing . . . . . I hope you will yet become sensible of your eternal wellfare. I shall go join your father and my blessed mother, and may you on your death-bed have as little [to] reproach yourself [with], as your once affectionate mother has! For I can [ ]

and say I was a good child. Can Horatia Nelson say so? I am unhappy to say you cannot.'

That, in later time, Horatia had doubts respecting her maternal parentage, was certainly not due to Lady Hamilton's neglect to tell her precisely who her mother was.

Summary of the chief Particulars of the aforegiven Evidence.

(*a*) Horatia was born between the 29th and 31st of January, 1801.

(*b*) At the time of Horatia's birth, and for some few days before and after that event, Lady Hamilton was confined to her bed at No. 23, Piccadilly.

(*c*) At the time of Horatia's birth, Lady Hamilton underwent a change of appearance that accords with the evidence of her having suffered from accouchement at the time of Horatia's birth.

(*d*) Immediately after Horatia's birth Nelson and Lady Hamilton corresponded in mystified (but no longer obscure) letters, the extant examples of which correspondence prove conclusively that Nelson believed himself to be the father, and that Lady Hamilton represented herself to be the mother of Horatia.

(*e*) Within eight days of Horatia's birth, Lady Hamilton without any attendant brought Horatia by night in a hackney-coach to Titchfield Street, and there put her under the charge of Nurse Gibson.

(*f*) In a letter, post-marked February 7th, 1801, Lady Hamilton requested Nurse Gibson to write to her 'by the penny post how the dear little Horatia is.'

(*g*) On February 5th, 1801, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton, under the assumed name of Thomson, respecting the name to be given the child, to wit, 'Its name will be Horatia, daughter of Johem and Morata Etnorb,' *i.e.*, daughter of Horatio and Emma Bronté.

(*h*) On March 1st, 1801, in a frank and outspoken letter, wholly free from mystification, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton, 'You know, my dearest Emma, that there is nothing in this world that I would not do for us to live together, and to have our dear little child with us . . . . I never had a dear pledge of love till you gave me one, and you, thank my God, never gave one to anybody else . . . . Kiss and bless our dear Horatia.'

(*j*) On October 21st, 1803, and October 19th, 1805, Nelson addressed to Horatia solemn written assurances that he was her 'father.'

(*k*) On May 13th, 1803, for purpose of mystification, Nelson caused a false birth-date to be inserted in the registration of Horatia's baptism at Marylebone.

(*l*) Also, for purpose of mystification, he subsequently represented to his friends and also authorized Lady Hamilton to represent to her friends, in accordance with the falsely registered birth-date, that Horatia was born before Lady Hamilton's return to England in 1801, and that the child was an orphan.

(*m*) On October 4th, and again on the 8th, 1805, in letters addressed to Nelson, Lady Hamilton wrote of herself as one of the parents of Horatia.

(*n*) On April 13th, 1813, Lady Hamilton declared herself in written words to Horatia herself that she was her mother.

Apart from the conclusive evidence afforded by letters written for purpose of mystification, we have letters, wholly devoid of mystification, which prove that Nelson and Lady Hamilton wrote to one another as the parents of Horatia. In the scolding letter—no letter composed for misleading 'society,' but a confidential epistle to the child for whose edification it was written—we have Lady Hamilton's clear and strong assertion that she was the girl's mother. The truth of the confidential statements by Nelson and Lady Hamilton is demonstrated by a large mass of documentary evidence and circumstantial details. Nothing can be urged against all this weight of direct evidence but words written by Nelson and Lady Hamilton for purpose of mystification, and the unauthoritative statements (for the most part they are mere statements of opinion) made by persons whom Nelson and Lady Hamilton had misled by their devices for concealing their child's parentage.

(11) *Thomas Allen's Story.* Though enough has been said to satisfy reasonable readers with respect to Horatia's parentage, some notice should be taken of a few other stories which since Nelson's death have caused some people to imagine that Horatia was or may have been the daughter of some other woman than Lady Hamilton. It did not give Sir Harris Nicolas much trouble to demolish the tale told by Nelson's *old* servant, Thomas Allen, whose reputation in Nelsonian annals rests chiefly on his fine servile devotion to the Admiral, and his fine faculty for telling fibs to or about his master.

In or about 1825, when the Wards, some twenty

years after Nelson's death, were hunting up facts to prove themselves in no degree connected with the adventuress either by blood or affinity, old Allen made a statement which the Rev. Philip Ward (Horatia's husband) reduced to writing, and Sir Harris Nicolas put in print. Here is the old servant's statement:

'One day, towards the latter end of January, 1801, while Lord Nelson was living in Half Moon Street, and when he was dressing for dinner, a female, who appeared to be very near her confinement, and much agitated, came and inquired for Lord Nelson. He (Allen) recognized her as the sister of a merchant at Genoa, and who had a brother a Lieutenant of the Navy. On Allen's informing Lord Nelson, he immediately desired him to call a hackney-coach, and to say nothing concerning it to the servants. He got into the coach, and drove off, not returning for a couple of hours. Allen also said she came over in the *Seahorse*, Sir William Fremantle, who was acquainted with the whole story. He further added that he heard afterwards that she died in her confinement.'

A very good example of 'the lie circumstantial,' this story is proved untrue by critical scrutiny of its details. Lord Nelson did not lodge in Half-Moon Street, but in Arlington Street, during the interval between his return to London from the Christmas festivity at Fonthill and his departure from London for Plymouth on January 13th, 1801. Lord Nelson was not living anywhere in London at the 'latter end' of the said January. Thomas Allen cannot have been in London in the later part of that month, because he was in attendance on his master at Plymouth. The *Seahorse* was not commanded by Captain Fremantle in 1800, nor did she return from the

Mediterranean to England in the later part of 1800, nor early in the following year. Some woman appearing to be *enceinte* may have called at Lord Nelson's lodgings in London, when he had rooms in Half-Moon Street, and shortly after the visit of the agitated lady, Nelson may have driven somewhere in a hackney-coach. Let it be granted that it was so. Let it even be granted that some lady, in a state of excitement and the condition of body mentioned by Thomas Allen, actually called upon Nelson at his lodgings shortly before he went from town to Plymouth in January, 1801. In what way would the facts, thus granted for the sake of argument, affect the mass of conclusive evidence that Emma Hamilton was Horatia's mother?

(12) *Sir Thomas Hardy's Tale.* In 1812, when Nelson had been dead close upon seven years, Sir Thomas Hardy ('Kiss me, Hardy!') pressed Lady Hamilton to tell him whether Nelson was really Horatia's father. On 7th October, 1812, he received her answer in the following brief note: 'MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,—Let me only say to you *that which is true.* Horatia is our dear Nelson's daughter. May God bless you!—EMMA HAMILTON.' More than twenty years later (24th March, 1835) Sir Thomas Hardy in his old age had a conversation touching Horatia's parentage with Mr. Edward Hawke Locker (the father of Mr. Arthur Locker, the able editor of 'The Graphic' newspaper), who made the following memorandum (*vide*, Sir Harris Nicolas's 'Dispatches and Letters,' vol. vii, p. 386) of the conversation:

'On asking Sir Thomas this day, 24th of March, 1835,

whose daughter he considered Horatia Nelson Thompson (*sic*) to be, he said, 'Certainly not Lady Hamilton's nor Lord Nelson's. I know the whole story, which is simply this,—her father was Thompson, sailmaker of the *Elephant*, in which Nelson hoisted his flag in the bombardment of Copenhagen, on the 2nd October [April] 1801. Thompson's wife was with him on board, and being taken in labour during the action, gave birth to this child in the sail-room. When the circumstance was made known to Nelson, he took a fancy to the child, and sent it home to Lady Hamilton's charge. When I was in London afterwards, upon our return, I called on Lady Hamilton in Piccadilly. She soon left the room, and presently returned with the child in her arms, saying, "Look what a pretty baby I have got," but made no observation as to whose it was, which I well knew, and said nothing myself, therefore.'—'When I,' *i.e.*, Mr. Locker, 'asked Sir Thomas to explain what more he knew, he said, "I consider she subsequently declared the child was Nelson's, that she might claim some pension or provision for it; and in order to favour this notion, when I pressed her in 1812 to say whose child it was, she wrote down the statement given in the preceding page."'

Under examination, old Admiral Hardy's story was found to be wrong in some of its principal details. Neither the sail-maker nor the sail-maker's mate on board of the *Elephant*, in 1801, was named Thompson. The bombardment of Copenhagen was an affair of the spring instead of the autumn, 1801, and Nelson moved his flag from the *St. George* to the *Elephant* on the 2nd April, instead of the 2nd October of that year. If any woman was delivered of a child on board the *Elephant* on or after the 2nd April, 1801, it cannot have been the child who was certainly born between 29th and 31st (inclusive) January, 1801, and was no less certainly under Nurse Gibson's care at No. 9, Little Titchfield Street, Marylebone, on 7th February,

1801, on which day the postal-mark was put upon Lady Hamilton's letter to the nurse, requiring information 'how *the dear little Miss Horatia is.*' If Sir Thomas was certain in 1812 of the facts, which he communicated to Mr. Locker in 1835, it is strange that he troubled himself in the earlier year to press Lady Hamilton for information on a point, about which he believed himself to be surely informed. It may, of course, be suggested that he pressed Lady Hamilton for the truth, merely to test her veracity. Anyhow, it is certain from letters written by Nelson for Lady Hamilton's eye and no other person's eye, that the brave and thoroughly honest old Sir Thomas Hardy knew no more than Mr. Haslewood knew of Horatia's maternal parentage. That Nelson's own dear Hardy was so ignorant on the interesting question, indicates how careful the hero of Trafalgar was to keep the secret facts of his association with Lady Hamilton from the knowledge of his closest and most confidential comrades. Sir Thomas Hardy's equally confident and erroneous statements on matters of fact should operate as a warning to biographers, how slow they should be to rely on the recollections of old people.

(13) *The most Ridiculous of all the Inventions.* Some readers may perhaps think that I should take some notice of the most absurd of all the ridiculous fables about the infant Horatia,—to wit, that the child (who, on attaining to maturity, became the mother of a son remarkable for his marvellously strong resemblance to the great Admiral) was neither Lady Hamilton's offspring nor Nelson's issue, but only some little female brat whom Lady Hamilton picked out

of a cellar, or bought with a few shillings out of a London garret, and palmed off upon Nelson as her and his child. No single scrap of testimony has ever been produced to give even the faintest colour of possibility to this monstrous invention. With adaptations to the case, this ludicrous fable might be told as reasonably of the domestic extraction of the proudest duchess of the peerage of Great Britain. The originator of the fiction has never been discovered. The story is no new fabrication. It has long lived amongst gossip-mongers, and for no less long a time has been pointed to by Nelsonian specialists as a good example of the preposterous cock-and-bull stories that fools have told and simpletons have believed about Nelson's child. The fable seems to have come to Monsieur Gagnière's knowledge during his sojourn in London. 'L'opinion générale,' says the unfortunate Monsieur Gagnière, 'de la critique anglaise est que l'infernale coquine' (to wit, Lady Hamilton) 'trompant à la fois son mari et son amant, supposa pour le mari quelque aventure romanesque où elle jouait le rôle de confidente, et pour l'amant un accouchement secret qui l'aurait rendu père; tandis qu'en réalité Horatia n'était qu'une enfant achetée ou volée par Emma pour resserrer les liens qui la rattachaient à Nelson.' One would like to know the names of Monsieur Gagnière's London acquaintances. Were they humourists,—so inhospitable and cruel as to amuse themselves with playing on the credulity of the foreigner?

(14) *Mrs. Ward's* (*Horatia's*) '*Case*' *with respect to her maternal parentage.* Though she had been most

emphatically assured by Lady Hamilton herself that they were related to one another as mother and daughter, it is not surprising that on becoming a woman Horatia entertained doubts of the truth of the emphatic statement. Children are sometimes nice and severe critics of their elders. A clever and observant girl, Horatia had nearly come to the end of her fourteenth year on the day of Lady Hamilton's death. Truthful as sunlight in her earlier time, Lady Hamilton was distinctly the reverse of truthful in her closing years. It can scarcely be questioned that the clever girl, who at least on two occasions came into bitter contention with her mother, was aware that Lady Hamilton was not a woman of strict veracity. Under these circumstances it is not wonderful, that on coming to maturity Horatia questioned whether she was really the daughter of Emma Hamilton. Nor is it wonderful that, on becoming a mother, Mrs. Ward became desirous to prove that she was not the daughter of a woman, whose reputation was distinctly defective, though Mr. Paget holds her comparable with Judith and Joan of Arc.

Mrs. Ward's case against the imputation of being the daughter of the lovely adventuress was no weak case. On the contrary, up to the time of the publication of the most important of the Thomson-letters and the 'Now, my own dear wife' letter by Dr. Pettigrew in 1849, it was a distinctly strong case; and it remains a good *primâ-facie* case to persons, who have not examined those unquestionably authentic epistles. Let us see on what the case rests.

(*a*) *Horatia's baptismal Registration.* Having no

suspicion of the falseness of the registration, at the outset of her search for and inquiries into the evidences of her parentage, Mrs. Ward saw in this certificate a clear proof that she was born on 29th October, 1800,—a day when Lady Hamilton was living under the world's observation at Hamburg, after enjoying for successive days the festivities in her own and Nelson's honour. As Lady Hamilton could not have secretly given birth to a child under such circumstances, Mrs. Ward had grounds for regarding the baptismal certificate as evidence that she was not the daughter of the adventuress.

(*b*) *Lady Hamilton's Thomson-letters to Nurse Gibson.* The evidence afforded by these letters, that she was under Nurse Gibson's charge at least as early as 7th February, 1801, and all the other evidence afforded by the series of letters, conflicted in no tittle with the baptismal certificate, testifying that she was born at a time when Lady Hamilton could not have undergone an accouchement. And whilst the letters were in this respect compatible with the registration, they contained no expression that could be regarded as an indication that 'dear little Miss Horatia' was the writer's daughter. In the letters Mrs. Ward saw herself styled 'Miss Horatia,' 'Horatia,' 'the little girl,' 'Miss Thomson,' 'Miss T.,' 'my god-daughter,' 'my dear god-child;' but in no one of the letters did Mrs. Ward see her infantile self described with any such tender and loving epithets, as so emotional a woman as Lady Hamilton could hardly have failed to use, at least once in a while, had she been writing about her *own* child. The letters also

seemed to Mrs. Ward to yield express and positive testimony that she was not the daughter of the woman, who penned those brief, cold notes. On 18th February, 1801, Lady Hamilton wrote to Nurse Gibson, 'At eleven to-morrow pray bring Miss Horatia . . . Her mama is better.' In another of the letters, post-marked 23rd March, 1801, Lady Hamilton wrote, 'My dear Mrs. Gibson, Pray do send the nurse away, and change the milk; for I don't like the nurse much, and *her parents advise it. The mother is very ill in the country;* therefore do all that's right, and to-morrow I will see you.' In the words, here printed in italics, Mrs. Ward saw positive testimony that she was *not* the daughter of the writer. Horatia's wet-nurse was changed because the child's 'parents wished it,' whilst the writer of the note had no decided objection to the woman, whom she did 'not like much.' More still; whilst Lady Hamilton was writing her cold orders in London, 'the mother' (Horatia's mother) 'was very ill in the country.' Again, in one of the letters, having neither date nor post-mark, Lady Hamilton, writing in the third person, says, 'Lady H. will be glad if Mrs. Gibson will call on her to-morrow at eleven o'clock with Miss Thomson . . . *Lady H. has had a letter from Miss T.'s mother, who continues very ill.*' Here again, Mrs. Ward saw testimony that her mother and Lady Hamilton were two different persons. Consequently, Mrs. Ward's 'case' rested to some extent on the Thomson-letters, written by Lady Hamilton to Nurse Gibson.

(*c*) *Mrs. Johnstone's 'Statement.'* Though it was so distinctly unfavourable to her view of her maternal

parentage, Mrs. Ward discovered grounds in this 'Statement' for holding that she was the daughter of some other woman than Lady Hamilton. That she could do so was doubtless due to the fact that she did not apprehend the precise significance of Mrs. Johnstone's words, 'The nurse declared she' [*i.e.* Horatia] 'was no more than eight days old.' Although she was a mother, so refined and delicate a woman as Mrs. Ward would be likely to imagine the nurse's words only meant that on her arrival at No. 9, Little Titchfield Street, she was a very little creature —no bigger nor stronger than most eight-days-old infants. But, when a nurse speaks of an infant as being 'no more than eight days old,' she means something more definite. A horse-dealer has not more precise grounds for declaring a horse under eight years of age, than a nurse has for declaring an infant 'no more than eight days old.' Missing the precise force of the nurse's words on the minute point, Mrs. Ward discovered evidence that she was the daughter of some other woman than Lady Hamilton in the concluding words of Mrs. Johnstone's statement, to wit, 'Lady Hamilton constantly visited her; Lord Nelson was frequently her companion in her visits to her and often came alone, and played for hours with the infant on the floor, calling her his own child.' Thus, whilst Nelson was certified to have shown lively parental fondness for the child and to have been in the habit of 'calling her his own child,' the 'Statement' afforded no testimony that Lady Hamilton showed maternal delight in the infant.

(*d*) '*Letters of Lord Nelson to Lady Hamilton*' (1814.)

In the 'Letters of Lord Nelson to Lady Hamilton' (1814), Mrs. Ward pondered over the strong evidence afforded by two Thomson-letters that her mother and Lady Hamilton were two different women. For example, in a letter addressed to Lady Hamilton on 16th February, 1801, Nelson enclosed the following note:

'I sit down, my dear Mrs. T., by desire of poor Thomson, to write you a line: not to assure you of his eternal love and affection for you and his dear child; but only to say that he is well, and as happy as can be, separated from all which he holds dear in this world. He has no thoughts separated from your dear love, and your interest. They are united with his: one fate, one destiny, he assures me, awaits you both. What can I say more? Only, to kiss his child for him; and love him as truly, sincerely, and faithfully as he does you; which is, from the bottom of his soul. He desires that you will more and more attach yourself to dear Lady Hamilton.'

Again, in a later letter, written apparently on March 10th, 1801, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton:

'I have seen and talked much with Mrs. Thomson's friend. The fellow seems to eat all my words, when I talk of her and his child! He says he never can forget your goodness and kind affection to her and his dear, dear child . . . . I am determined to keep him on board, for I know, if they got together, they would soon have another. But after our two months' trip, I hope they will never be separated; and then let them do as they please.'

To Mrs. Ward up to 1849, before she had ever seen or heard of the 'Now, my own dear wife,' or the Thomson-letters first published by Dr. Pettigrew, it of course appeared that this note to Mrs. Thomson and this passage from one of Nelson's letters to Lady

Hamilton were sure testimony that her mother was Mrs. Thomson, and that Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton were two different women.

(*e*) *Mr. Haslewood's Evidence.* Mrs. Ward, who like Sir Harris Nicolas took old Mr. Haslewood at his own valuation, had no doubt that, besides being Lord Nelson's 'legal adviser' on certain matters, the superannuated solicitor had been Nelson's 'confidential friend;' and on 26th September, 1846, Mr. Haslewood wrote from Brighton to Mrs. Ward:

'My dear Madam,—I dare not write so fully as I could wish on the topics referred to in your kind letter of the 23rd, lest the secret which I am bound to keep should be rendered too transparent. Thus much only may be said without incurring such risk. Your mother was well acquainted with Lady Hamilton, and saw you often during your infancy; but soon after her marriage she went to reside at a considerable distance from London, which or [*sic*] never visited afterwards.—Lamenting that I cannot be more communicative, I remain always, my dear madam, faithfully yours,—W^m. Haslewood.' (*Vide*, 'Blackwood's Magazine,' May, 1888.)

Thus emphatically and authoritatively was Mrs. Ward assured by a gentleman, who had been Lord Nelson's solicitor, that she was *not* Lady Hamilton's daughter.

(*f*) *Evidence of Nelson's chaplain, Dr. Scott.* Dr. Scott's letter to Mrs. Ward respecting her maternal parentage has not been published, but in November, 1874, when she sent Mr. John Paget (the 'Blackwood' essayist) a copy of the above-printed letter from Mr. Haslewood, Mrs. Ward wrote, 'This is a copy of a letter I had from Mr. Haslewood; Dr. Scott's account was the same.' Consequently, Mrs. Ward had the assurance of Nelson's chaplain, a gen-

tleman of the highest honour and worth, that she was *not* Nelson's daughter.

(*g*) *Mrs. Ward's other Evidences respecting her Maternal Parentage.* Readers may be sure, that in the six last paragraphs I have fully exhibited the strength of the evidence, with which Mrs. Ward justified her disinclination to admit that she was Lady Hamilton's daughter. Had the evidence been stronger in 1846, Sir Harris Nicolas would not have failed to show it was stronger in the seventh and last volume of the 'Dispatches and Letters.' Had the evidence become stronger since 1846, we should have learnt in what particulars it had become stronger from 'H. H. E. N.-W's' letter to the *Times* and from Mr. Paget's article in 'Blackwood's Magazine' of May, 1888. Still in order that they may not under-rate in any degree the strength of Mrs. Ward's 'case,' I counsel readers to assume, that the lady was in a position to produce 'other documents,' which accorded with the already mentioned matters of evidence,—that she was born on 29th October, 1800; that, after taking her from No. 9, Little Titchfield Street to Merton Place, Lady Hamilton used to speak of her as an orphan, who had been thrown on Nelson's hands before his return to England in November, 1800; that Lady Hamilton had Nelson's authority for so speaking of her; and that the view taken of her by several of Nelson's friends accorded with Lady Hamilton's way of accounting for her position at Merton Place.

Surely, Mrs. Ward's was a good *primâ facie* case.

(*a*) She could prove by the baptismal register of Marylebone Church that she was born on a day,

when Lady Hamilton could not have given birth to a child.

(*b*) She could produce letters of unquestionable authenticity by Lady Hamilton to Nurse Gibson, showing that in February, 1801, her own mother was ill in the country, whilst Lady Hamilton was writing the letters in London, and that whilst her 'parents' insisted that her wet-nurse should be changed, Lady Hamilton had no strong dislike to the woman.

(*c*) She could show by Mrs. Johnstone's statement that, whilst Nelson in her early infancy overflowed with paternal fondness for her, Nurse Gibson and Mrs. Johnstone were not struck by a similar tenderness on the part of Lady Hamilton.

(*d*) She could produce printed letters, in which Nelson spoke of her mother as another woman than Lady Hamilton, and of the kindness shown to her mother by Lady Hamilton.

(*e*) She could produce the written assurance of Mr. Haslewood, Lord Nelson's professional adviser and 'confidential friend,' that she was *not* Lady Hamilton's daughter.

(*f*) She could produce the written assurance of the Rev. Dr. Scott, Lord Nelson's chaplain and spiritual adviser, that she was *not* Lady Hamilton's daughter.

(*g*) She could produce other documents, showing that she was born before Lord Nelson's return to England in November, 1800,—that she was born at a time when Lady Hamilton could not have possibly given birth to her,—that Lady Hamilton had heard of her existence from Nelson before setting eyes on her,

—that Lady Hamilton cared for her in her infancy only because Nelson begged her to care for the orphan who had been thrown upon his hands,—and lastly, that her position at Merton was that of a child whom Lady Hamilton befriended only because Lord Nelson had entreated her to do so.

It was, indeed, a strong *primâ facie* case,—a case not to be shaken by weak counter-evidence—a case so strong *primâ facie* as to fully justify Mrs. Ward in declining to admit that she was Lady Hamilton's daughter.

But positive evidence of the strongest and most conclusive kind has made this strong *primâ facie* case no case at all.

(*a*) The baptismal registration at Marylebone Church has been proved to be a false certificate in respect to the birth-date.

(*b*) The statements of the unquestionably authentic letters by Lady Hamilton to Nurse Gibson, which seemed good evidence that Horatia was not Lady Hamilton's child, have been proved to be delusive and mystifying statements, made by Lady Hamilton in order to conceal that she was Horatia's mother.

(*c*) The inference drawn from Mrs. Johnstone's silence respecting Lady Hamilton's demeanour to the infant, for whom Nelson showed passionate affection, has been proved erroneous by Nelson's confidential letter of 1st March, 1801, (the 'Now, my own dear wife' letter) to Lady Hamilton.

(*d*) The note to Mrs. T. and the passages of printed letters, in which Nelson wrote of Horatia's mother and Lady Hamilton as two different women, have

been proved to be mere items of the large mass of mystified correspondence, in which Nelson and Lady Hamilton wrote to one another about their child,—items of the large volume of Thomson-letters which, now that they have been brought together, afford such a superabundance of conclusive evidence that Mrs. Thomson and Lady Hamilton were the same woman, and that Nelson and Thomson were the same man.

(*e*) It has been discovered that, though he was the Admiral's legal adviser in certain matters, Mr. Haslewood was not, in any fair sense of the term, Nelson's familiar and confidential friend. It has been proved that Mr. Haslewood was not in Nelson's confidence with respect to Horatia's birth,—the delicate secret, which the Admiral withheld even from so close and confidential a friend as Sir Thomas Hardy.

(*f*) It has been proved that the Rev. Dr. Scott, albeit he was Nelson's chaplain and a gentleman whom Nelson valued highly, cannot have been in the Admiral's confidence on the subject, about which he wrote so erroneously to Mrs. Ward.

(*g*) Mrs. Ward's 'other documents' were mere 'blinds,' to hide the secret of her maternal parentage from inquisitive persons, or documents written by persons, who had been imposed upon by Lady Hamilton's and Nelson's mystifications.

In support of Mr. Haslewood's statement to Mrs. Ward, Mr. Paget remarked in his unfortunate article on Lady Hamilton (*vide*, 'Blackwood' for May 1888),

'It must be observed that this letter was written in 1846. It may readily be supposed that *if*, as Mr. Haslewood states,

the mother of Horatia was some lady since married, and probably living at the time, he would feel bound strictly to preserve the secret. *If*, on the other hand, Mr. Haslewood knew that Horatia was the daughter of Lady Hamilton, it is difficult to understand why he should have gratuitously manufactured a circumstantial statement utterly false, when, *if* he still thought it his duty to conceal his knowledge, silence would have equally answered the purpose.'

What can be more feeble and ludicrous than this if-if-if stuff, put forth in the face of conclusive evidence that Mr. Haslewood's circumstantial statement was even more wrong than Sir Thomas Hardy's no less circumstantial statement about Horatia's birth, and Mrs. Hunter's circumstantial statement about Lady Hamilton's funeral? What is the good of talking about '*if*' Horatia's mother was living in 1846, when the evidence is conclusive that she died in January, 1815, and about '*if*' she married after Horatia's birth, when it is certain that she did not do so. '*If*, on the other hand, Mr. Haslewood knew that Horatia was the daughter of Lady Hamilton, etc.!' Who ever suggested that he knew any such thing? The case against him is that he knew nothing whatever about the business. Certainly the writer of this book has not charged Mr. Haslewood with uttering what he knew to be untrue. The reasonable explanation of his action in the affair is that, having been effectually misled and thoroughly blinded by the Thomson mystifications in 1801, he believed their story no less firmly in 1846, and that in his old age he delighted in imagining he was made acquainted with the truth of an interesting affair by Lord Nelson himself, at a time when he was only being

blinded to the truth by the very fictions that were used for misleading the Admiral's 'closest friends,' no less than his 'mere acquaintances.' The same explanation may no less reasonably be offered for the Rev. Dr. Scott's letter to Mrs. Ward. Whilst he kept so close and confidential a friend as Sir Thomas Hardy wholly in the dark about Horatia's birth, Nelson was not likely to have blabbed the secret to a solicitor and a clergyman,—typical representatives of two of the classes of people, for whose mystification he devised the Thomson fictions and the other 'blinds.'

The Rev. Dr. Scott, Mr. Haslewood, Sir Thomas Hardy, all told circumstantial stories, that were quite erroneous stories, about Horatia's parentage. Mrs. Hunter, in her old age, told an equally circumstantial and erroneous story about Lady Hamilton. Their motives for making the erroneous statements cannot affect the conclusive evidence that the statements were erroneous. But it is only reasonable and fair to assume that, in telling their respective fables, all four were moved by a natural desire to tell what they sincerely *believed* themselves to *know* about matters of interest.

That Dr. Scott and Mr. Haslewood were as wrong as Sir Thomas Hardy in what they said about Horatia's parentage is incontestable. Whilst the mystified letters afford conclusive evidence that Horatia was Mrs. Thomson's daughter, and that Mrs. Thomson was Lady Hamilton, the 'Now, my own dear wife,' letter is of itself conclusive on the chief question in dispute. Nelson wrote on March 1st, 1801, to Lady Hamilton, 'You know, my dearest Emma, that

there is nothing in this world that I would not do for us to live together, and to have our dear little child with us . . . . I love, never did love anyone else. I never had a dear pledge of love till you gave me one, and you, thank my God, never gave one to anybody else . . . . Kiss and bless *our* dear Horatia.' There is no touch of mystification in any sentence of this epistle, written chiefly for cheering Emma Hamilton, and opening with an expression of the writer's delight at being able to give full scope to his feelings. The most sceptical and cynical reader will admit that Nelson would scarcely have essayed to cheer Emma Hamilton by writing to her of 'our dear little child . . . . *our* dear Horatia,' without having grounds for thinking her the child's mother and himself the child's father.

CHAPTER II.

'LADY HAMILTON'S STATEMENT.'

Effects of the 'Statement'—Description of the Document—Examination of its thirty-four Paragraphs—Last Letters from Marie-Antoinette to Maria Caroline—Emma the De-Bourbonizer—The Spanish King's Letter—Emma her own Trumpeter—The secret Warrant for watering at Syracuse—England's Debt to Emma for the Victory of the Nile—Her Care of the sick and wounded Nelson—She controls King, Queen, Nelson, and General Acton—She counsels War, and War is made—Migration of the Court from Naples to Palermo—Losses without Compensation—Contradictory Estimates—The starving Maltese—Conflicting or questionable Statements—Emma off Naples in 1799—Not quite *fourteen* Years!—From Palermo to Vienna with Maria Caroline—The Queen's Generosity and Emma's Magnanimity—Emma's later Services to Nelson—She makes him go to the Baltic—England's Debt to her for 'Copenhagen' and 'Trafalgar'—'The Sale of the Jewels!'—Facts underlying the Fiction—Emma accounts for her financial Difficulties—Her Arraignment of Earl Nelson—Emma's final Demands—Explanation of her Inaccuracies—Their historic Consequence.

THE document entitled 'Lady Hamilton's Statement,' to which several references are made in previous chapters of this work, has through the indiscretion of biographers been so largely fruitful of misconceptions respecting Nelson's character and story, and of misapprehensions respecting Lady Hamilton's alleged services to her native country, that nice critics of her character and exact students of the Admiral's career

will be thankful for an opportunity of perusing the *ipsissima verba* of so curious a piece of autobiography by so singular and interesting a woman.

Consisting of thirty-four paragraphs, which I have numbered in the ensuing printed transcript, the MS. of the 'Statement' is dateless; but as it was composed by Lady Hamilton in support of a petition for a pension, which she made to the Prince Regent, who is mentioned in Paragraph 30 as 'our august Prince,' the lengthy memorandum cannot have been prepared earlier than 1811, to which year its composition may be assigned.

Written on ordinary foolscap paper by the clerical hand of a law-copyist, the memorandum abounds with internal evidence that Lady Hamilton's pen produced the original draft of the writing. That the 'Statement' was her own handiwork is also indicated by her signature ('Emma Hamilton,' in her peculiar and unmistakable penmanship), that appears at the foot of the last sheet of the curiously misleading and inaccurate document.

Editorial Comments on 'Lady Hamilton's Statement.'

Paragraph 1. (*a*) That Marie-Antoinette wrote to Maria Caroline, after September, 1791, appears from the fact that the Marchioness Solari came to Naples in the last month of that year, with letters written by the French to the Sicilian queen. As the Marchioness was intimate with

'Lady Hamilton's Statement,' (1811).

1. In September, 1791, I went with my husband thro' France to Naples. At Paris I waited on the Queen, then at the Thuilleries, who entrusted me with (*a*) the last letter she wrote to her sister, the Queen of Naples. This (*b*) led to an ascendancy in Her Majesty's esteem, that I never after failed to

Lady Hamilton, and was her guest at Caserta in December, 1791, Emma Hamilton cannot be assumed to have been ignorant at the time that her visitor had brought letters from the one to the other sister. (*b*) Marie-Antoinette's action was in no degree accountable for the favour shown by Maria Caroline to the English adventuress. (*c*) That Emma Hamilton often used her influence at the Sicilian court for the advantage of British officers and others of her compatriots is unquestionable; but the suggestion that she was accountable for Maria Caroline's favourable disposition towards England and the English is absurd.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 2. Instead of occurring in the year 1793, and during Lord Hood's occupation of Toulon, the operations for the reduction of Corsica followed the allies' withdrawal from Toulon, and were affairs of 1794. (*b*) As the 'operations' were carried forward under the direction and command of Lord Hood, Lady Hamilton tripped in representing that the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Jervis, was personally employed upon them. (*c*) The assistance afforded by Maria exert (*c*) in favour of every British interest.

2. In the (*a*) year 1793, when Lord Hood had taken possession of Toulon, and Sir John Jervis was (*b*) employ'd upon the reduction of Corsica, the latter kept writing to me for everything he wanted, which (*c*) I procur'd to be promptly provided, and, as his letters prove, had considerably facilitated the reduction of the Island. I had by this time (*d*) induced the King, through my influence with the Queen, to become so zealous in the good cause, that both would often say, 'I had de-Bour-

Caroline for the furtherance of the operations was given in accordance with the secret Anglo-Sicilian treaty of the 20th of July, 1793, for which Emma Hamilton was in no degree accountable, though she was no doubt in the confidence of the chief diplomatic agents of the contracting parties, between whom she had for some time acted as a secret messenger and instrument for intercommunication. (*d*) In claiming credit for de-Bourbonizing Ferdinand, and drawing the Sicilian government into cordial sympathy and co-operation with Great Britain, Lady Hamilton claimed credit for originating and compassing a policy on which Maria Caroline had entered years before the English adventuress ever set foot in Italy.—J. C. J.

bonized them and made them all English.'

Paragraph 3. (*a*) Emma Hamilton made no such discovery. The courier's arrival was made known to her by the Queen. (*b*) Emma Hamilton's statement that she persuaded the Queen to pick the letter secretly out of the King's pocket was too amazing an invention even for Dr. Pettigrew's credulity. (*c*) The letter contained no such announcement. A long term of months had passed since the

3. By unceasing cultivation of this influence, and no less watchfulness to turn it to my country's good, it happened that I (*a*) discover'd a courier had brought the King of Naples a private letter from the King of Spain; (*b*) I prevailed on the Queen to take it from his pocket unseen. We found it to contain (*c*) the King of Spain's resolution to withdraw from the coalition, and join the

King of Spain's withdrawal from the coalition, and the Spanish king had already written his brother two letters touching his arrangements for peace with France. The secret letter announced the writer's purpose to join the French in fighting England. (*d*) Instead of lying dangerously ill at this time, Sir William Hamilton is shown by one of Lady Hamilton's contemporary letters to have been in the enjoyment of unusually good health. (*e*) It is incredible that so slovenly and inexact a pen-woman as Emma Hamilton either offered, or was allowed, to make a copy of a letter in cypher. (*f*) The messenger dispatched to Lord Grenville with the copy of the secret letter was described by Lady Hamilton at the time as 'our courier.' (*g*) At this point of her career, Lady Hamilton, with no more than a yearly allowance of £200 for all her personal expenses, was sometimes so pressed for money as to ask Mr. Charles Greville for presents of clothing. She cannot, therefore, have had a private fund out of which she could have taken £400 at a single dip.—J. C. J.

French against England. (*d*) My husband at this time lay dangerously ill. I prevail'd on the Queen to allow my taking (*e*) a copy, with which I immediately (*f*) dispatch'd a messenger to my Lord Grenville, taking all the necessary precautions for his safe arrival, then become very difficult and altogether cost me about £400 (*g*) paid out of my own private fund.

Paragraph 4.

4. I shall not detain by detailing the many less important altho' useful matters,

to which my influence and activity had given effect from this time till 1798, but merely observe that no exertion of mine was wanting to forward every action sought, and in which I was always successful, particularly in providing for the wants of our brave fleets in those seas, altho' at this time French ascendency and revolutionary ideas had arrived at such a height in Naples as made it dangerous for the British minister to go to court.

Paragraph 5. The reader should study this perplexing and amazing paragraph with especial care, in order that he may see how Dr. Pettigrew in the 'Life of Nelson,' and Mr. Paget in the earlier of his two 'Blackwood' articles on Lady Hamilton, came to represent that Nelson was on the point of making his second voyage to Egypt, when he had not yet left Sicilian waters on his first trip to Aboukir Bay. (*a*) In June, 1798, when Buonaparte's naval armament had, some three or four days earlier, passed the Sicilies for Malta, Nelson had no thought of running with all possible expedition to Gibraltar, in order to water and victual his ships; for at that time, (*b*) instead of being in urgent want of fresh supplies, his ships had a store

5. It was at this awful period in June, 1798, about three days after the French fleet passed by for Malta, Sir William and myself were awakened at six o'clock in the morning by Captain Trowbridge with a letter from Sir Horatio Nelson, then with his fleet lying off the bay near to Capree, requesting that the ambassador would procure him permission to enter with his fleet into Naples, or any of the Sicilian ports to provision, water, &c., as (*a*) otherwise he must run for Gibraltar, being (*b*) in urgent want, and that consequently he would be obliged to give over all further pursuit of the French fleet, which he had miss'd (*c*) at Egypt on account of their having put into Malta.

of water and victuals, that held out till after the middle of the next month. (*c*) In June, 1798, whilst his squadron was lying off Capri, instead of having already missed the French fleet at Egypt, 'on account of their having put into Malta,' he had not yet visited Egyptian waters. It is surprising that, after a lapse of thirteen years, Emma Hamilton so mixed and muddled the facts and dates of a passage of history that stirred her so profoundly in the summer and autumn of 1798. But it is much more surprising that the manifest blunderings of the beauty's 'Statement' should have brought two such practised men of letters as Dr. Pettigrew and Mr. Paget to signal and comical discomfiture.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 6. (*a*) The number of ships that might enter a Sicilian port at the same time was limited by the Franco-Sicilian treaty to *four*. (*b*) As the Queen was fully alive to the necessity she was under to support Nelson, and as Emma Hamilton was well aware that the Queen placed all her political hopes on Nelson's action in her behalf, and was therefore firmly resolved to help the Admiral to her utmost, it is incredible

6. At this time Naples had made peace with France by desire of our court. Le Comte La Michelle was French ambassador; one of the stipulations was 'that no more than (*a*) two English ships should enter into any of the Neapolitan or Sicilian ports.' However Sir William call'd up General Acton the minister, who immediately conven'd a council, the King being present; this was about half-past six; I went to the Queen, who

that the English adventuress either implored, or saw any need for imploring, the Queen to recognize the importance of Nelson's assistance, and to aid him to carry out her own settled policy. (*c*) What was there in the communication, which Emma Hamilton declares herself to have made, that was calculated to alarm the Queen, who was familiar with all the features of the political situation, and as a member of the council and actual autocrat of her husband's dominions knew that the British squadron, which had been dispatched by Lord St. Vincent for her protection, as well as for the discomfiture of the French, would look to her for needful supplies of water and victuals? (*d*) The notion that Emma dictated the words of the order and that the proud Queen wrote what her mere instrument ordered her to write is superlatively comical. Observe that Lady Hamilton in her 'Statement' and Nelson in the so-called codicil contradict one another on an important point of this business. Whilst Emma Hamilton declares that the Queen wrote the secret warrant with her own hand, Nelson speaks of the Queen as 'causing letters to be wrote.'—J. C. J.

received me in her bed; I told (*b*) Her Majesty that now depended on her the safety of the Two Sicilies, should the council decide on negative or half measures, as I *fear'd they must do;* I told her the Sicilies must be lost, if Nelson was not supplied, and thereby enabled to follow the great French force, that had gone by in that direction but a few days before. Nothing could exceed the (*c*) alarm with which this communication inspired her. She said the King was in council and would decide with his ministers. I pray'd and implor'd her on my knees; she could not withstand my entreaties and arguments. I brought her pen, ink and paper to the bed. I (*d*) dictated and she *wrote* a positive order directed 'to all Governors of the Two Sicilies to receive with hospitality the British fleet to water, victual and aid them.' In every way, this order I was well aware, as was the fact, would be more respected even than that of the King. At eight o'clock the council broke up. I was called to attend Captain Trowbridge and my husband to our house. The faces of the King, of Acton and Sir William too plainly told the determination that they could not break

with France. On our way home I said I had anticipated the result and provided against it; that, while they were in council, I had been with the Queen, and had not implor'd her in vain, producing the order to their astonishment and delight. They embraced me with patriotic joy. 'It will,' said the gallant Trowbridge, 'cheer to extacy your valiant friend Nelson. Otherwise we must have gone for Gibraltar.'

Paragraph 7. (*a*) That Sir William Hamilton wrote these words to Nelson rests wholly on Lady Hamilton's mere and uncorroborated statement. (*b*) If Nelson ever wrote these alleged words to Lady Hamilton, the epistle in which he wrote them perished without coming under the observation of any competent historian. If the Admiral promised to call the battle 'Emma's and the Queen's battle,' he was strangely neglectful of his promise. (*c*) Observe how Emma in this sentence holds to the erroneous statement that brought Dr. Pettigrew and Mr. John Paget to grief.—J. C. J.

7. Sir William wrote to Nelson the decision of the council, but (*a*) said, 'You will receive from Emma herself what will do the business, and procure all your wants.' I enclosed the order to the Admiral, praying that 'the Queen may be as little committed in the use of it as the glory and service of the country would admit of.' The Admiral's reply in my hands (*b*) says 'that he [had] received the precious order, and that if he gained a battle it should be called mine and the Queen's, for to you I will owe my success. Without this our returning to Gibraltar was decided on, but I will now come back to you crown'd with laurel, or covered with cyprus.' The former I had the glory to witness after his

destruction of the French fleet at Aboukir, (*c*) where he found them, after his having been water'd, provision'd, and refresh'd by virtue of the order I had so procured him.

Paragraph 8. (*a*) Sir William Hamilton never hoped to get more than £1,200 a-year from the country to his wife for her life, in acknowledgment of her alleged 'services' to Great Britain; and it was only on his death-bed that he permitted himself to entertain so egregious a hope. For years he regarded £500 a-year for life as the pension she might reasonably ask and possibly obtain from the country. The same view was taken of the matter by Nelson, Sir George Rose, and all the more judicious of Lady Hamilton's official friends. How much more highly Emma appraised her patriotic service appears from this modest claim for as much money as the nation would have paid before-hand for so glorious a victory as the battle of the Nile. (*b*) Though Nelson was weak from fever and the severe wound of his head, at the time of his triumphal reception at Naples, the letters he wrote during his brief stay in the capital afford conclusive evidence that his constitution

8. Here I may be allow'd to ask what sum would the country or its government have given before that battle for its attainment, and (*a*) what less should be given for that instrument which led to it, and without which all hope, all opportunity of success must have been abandon'd? On the 20th September Nelson returned to Naples after his glorious victory. I had then inspired the Queen with such devotion to our cause that every desire was granted for the repair of the ships, taking care of the wounded, and general supply of the fleet. And I appeal to every officer, nay, seaman of that conquering fleet, to testify what they witnessed of my unceasing solicitude and indefatigable exertions to reward their valour by every comfort I could procure them, and above all, to their beloved sick (*b*) and wounded chief, whose invaluable friendship I ever after had; who, to the hour of his death, did always say he could not have surviv'd but for the manner

was not so shakened and shattered as Lady Hamilton's 'Statement' represents.—J. C. J.

I cheer'd, nurs'd, and attended him at that time.

Paragraph 9. Observe the over-weening self-conceit and comical vanity with which 'the instrument' speaks of her influence over Neapolitan affairs.—J. C. J.

9. The sore evidence that Nelson had now given the French of my influence at the Neapolitan court urged their ambassador to sharp complaints for a breach of faith in supplying the British fleet at Syracuse contrary to the Treaty.

Paragraph 10. See how in this paragraph Emma Hamilton represents herself as originating after the battle of Aboukir the policy and course of action which Maria Caroline, long before Nelson's victory, had decided to take at the first opportunity.—J. C. J.

10. At this juncture, while I found the court flush'd with our Victory of the Nile, I suggested to the Queen the benefits and havoc that would result by breaking boldly with the French, and to dismiss their ambassador altogether, and then raise an army to oppose their threats of invasion.

Paragraph 11. Here Emma Hamilton asks us to believe that she, a mere instrument in the state affairs on which she was employed, originated and directed Maria Caroline's foreign policy, and determined the action of the King, Queen, Sir William Hamilton, Nelson, and the Neapolitan prime minister.—J. C. J.

11. The Queen, delighted with the proposal, open'd it to the King, as I did to Sir William and to Nelson; the minister Acton was brought into the measure, and it was resolv'd on in council accordingly. In consequence and totally unexpected to himself, the French ambassador and his suite were sent off at 24 hours' notice.

Paragraph 12. Emma had as good grounds for repre-

12. An army of 35,000 men was rais'd in nearly a

senting that the King served 'in the ranks' of his army, as for representing that the attempt to drive the French from the papal territory was undertaken at her instance. —J. C. J.

Paragraph 13. (*a*) Ferdinand and Maria Caroline never for a moment thought of putting themselves under the power of the French. (*b*) There is a superabundance of documentary evidence that Lady Hamilton's part in the arrangements for the royal migration from Naples to Palermo was the part of a mere instrument and confidential agent, who only did what Maria Caroline ordered her to do. With all her self-conceit and boastful vanity, the charming beauty had not the daring to represent that she carried the Queen over the sea to Palermo against her will. Indeed, she admits that the Queen was 'almost always with her.' *(c)* As Maria Caroline, in the autumn of 1798, had been living for years in fear of a French invasion, and as her extant letters show how steadily she was possessed by this fear, and how ve-

month. They march'd from St. Germains under the command of General Mack, the King himself in the ranks, against a scatter'd and inferior French force; yet so rapidly was the army destroy'd as to oblige our embarkation at Naples by that day month.

13. The point of policy with the court was then, (*a*) 'Whether they should put themselves entirely under the French, or fly to Sicily under our protection?' The many difficulties of getting away, and the uncertainty how a flying court would be received there, were strong inducements to abide all consequences at Naples. (*b*) I urged and pleaded the necessity and safety of their coming away; the Queen was almost always with me, and as the French advanced I (*c*) placed the horror of their approach full before her eyes, and at length prevail'd in deciding this most important measure, for the King was soon brought over to our side. The difficulties were yet many and of the most dangerous complexion; the growth of French principle and the rapid march of their army upon the capital made it too hazardous to trust (*d*) the Neapolitans, with the

hemently she detested and dreaded the French, there was small need for Emma Hamilton to play upon the Queen's liveliest sensibilities by putting the horrors of a French invasion 'full before her eyes' (*d*) Maria Caroline's design of withdrawing from Naples to Sicily was confided by her to numerous Neapolitans. The money, jewels, works of art and other treasures, taken from the Caserta palace and the Palazzo Reale of Naples to Palermo were packed and conveyed in the dark hours to the British embassy, or to the docks by Maria Caroline's confidential Italian servants.—J. C. J.

plan of getting away the royal family, the court and treasures.

Paragraph 14. That the main statements as well as the details of this passage of Lady Hamilton's fanciful 'Statement' are inaccurate appear from unquestionably authentic letters by Nelson and the Queen of Naples. Instead of gradually removing boxes of jewels, barrels of gold and chests of apparel from the Palazzo Reale, Lady Hamilton only received at her own house the successive consignments of treasure and costly goods, which the Queen sent by her trustiest servants to the British Embassy for

14. I however began the work myself and gradually removed all the jewels and then 36 barrels of gold to our house. These I marked as stores for Nelson, being obliged to use every device to prevent the attendants having any idea of our proceedings. By many such stratagems I got those treasures embark'd, and, this point gained, the King's resolution of coming off was strengthened; and the Queen I was sure of.—The immortal Nelson testifys that all this would never have been

consignment to Nelson, who took measures for their safe transportation to Palermo. Instead of the jewels being thus conveyed from the palace to Sir William Hamilton's house before the gold, it appears from Maria Caroline's letters that, instead of being 'removed' gradually, the jewels and gold were brought to the British Embassy on the same night, though it had been the Queen's intention to send them on two successive nights, and that their removal was effected without the personal aid of Lady Hamilton, who during the preparations for the flight was too busy in helping Sir William Hamilton to pack his vases and pictures to have time just then for personal attendance on the Queen.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 15. In 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' *vide*, vol. ii, pp. 34—38, and pp. 197—199, I demonstrated conclusively that, instead of losing goods and chattels worth £9,000 by the migration of the court from Naples to Palermo, Lady Hamilton cannot have lost more than a few hundred pounds' worth of portable property, and that for this comparatively small loss (if she sustained any loss at all) effected, but for my management and exertions. In his letter to Lord St. Vincent or Lord Spencer, he says on that occasion, 'Lady Hamilton seem'd to be an angel dropt from heaven for the preservation of the royal family.' They were, indeed, unquestionably dear to me; but made entirely so by their perpetual acquiescence to all my wishes in favour of my country.

15. Here I humbly submit if it is not to my efforts in thus getting away the royal family, court and treasures from the French grasp, that Sicily has been preserved from that power. When the many, I may say the hair-breadth risks we ran in our escapes are considered, it must be obvious that to cover or colour our proceedings, we were compel'd to abandon our houses, and all our valuables as they stood,

'she was compensated twice, thrice and again by the gifts of clothing' and jewellery 'made to her by Maria Caroline' in Sicily; and that Sir William Hamilton's losses of the same kind from the same cause did not exceed £10,000, by his own statement of the case, made in the year 1800. —At the time of the courtly migration, the British ambassador left behind him at Naples, Caserta and Posilipo a good deal of furniture, which he failed to recover after the fall of the Parthenopeian republic. But Lady Hamilton was egregiously inaccurate in representing that she and her husband 'abandoned their houses' (*i.e.* at Naples, Posilipo and Caserta) 'and all their valuables as they stood, without venturing to remove a single article.' The case was very different. Sir William's portable possessions consisted chiefly of antique vases, pictures and other *objets d'art*, which were packed carefully and shipped for transportation to Palermo, —some in Nelson's flag-ship, the *Vanguard*, some in the *Colossus*, and a third lot of them in a transport. The articles shipped in the *Colossus* were lost to the connoisseur through the wreck of the vessel; but the other two lots without venturing to remove a single article. My own private property thus left, to effect this great purpose, was little if any short of £9,000, and Sir William's not less than £30,000, which sum, had he bequeathed it, might naturally have been willed to me in whole or part.

of valuables reached London safely. In 1800, when he made an estimate of the losses in the hope of getting pecuniary compensation from the English government, Sir William appraised the lost things at £10,000. But he made this appraisement under the impression that some of his most valuable antique vases had gone to the bottom of the sea in the unfortunate *Colossus*. On the 7th March, 1801, he wrote from Piccadilly to Lord Nelson, 'To my great satisfaction I have found some of the most capital vases, and which I thought surely lost on board the *Colossus*. It has comforted me much.' The recovery of these 'most capital vases' must have considerably reduced the amount of the losses, which, before the recovery, had been computed by the sanguine collector at no more than £10,000. —So much for Lady Hamilton's 'Statement' that her husband lost thirty thousand pounds' worth of valuables, through the conditions under which the retreat from Naples to Palermo was made.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 16.

16. To show the caution and secrecy that was necessarily used in thus getting away, I had on the night of our embarkation to attend the party given by Kilem

Effendi, who was sent by the Grand Seignior to Naples, to present Nelson with the Shahleugh or Plume of Triumph. I had to steal from the party, leaving our carriages and equipages waiting at his house, and in about fifteen minutes to be at my post, where my task was to conduct the royal family thro' the subterraneous passage to Nelson's boats, by that moment waiting on the shore! The season for this voyage was extremely hazardous, and our miraculous preservation is [? was] recorded by the Admiral upon our arrival at Palermo.

Paragraph 17. 17. When in 1799 Lord Keith miss'd the French squadron, and Nelson sail'd in quest of them from Palermo, he left me directions to open all letters and despatches for him, and to act in his behalf to the best in my power, governing myself by events.

Paragraph 18. 18. Sir Alexander Ball was at this time in possession of the island of Malta, residing at St. Antonio. The French possessed La Valeta.

Paragraph 19. 19. Sir Alexander Ball sent six natives of Malta deputies to Nelson at Palermo, for a supply of grain;

necessity being so great for provisions, that the inhabitants were ready to join any *sortie*.

Paragraph 20. For the particulars of the transaction, so strangely misrepresented in this paragraph, readers are referred to 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, pp. 130—135. It is true that Emma Hamilton purchased supplies of corn, which afforded temporary relief to the starving Maltese; but the grain was bought for the most part, if not wholly, with £7,000, assigned for the purpose by Maria Caroline. It is conceivable that to this £7,000 Emma Hamilton added a small sum out of her own slenderly furnished purse; but her statement that she provided £5,000 out of her own private money was an egregious exaggeration, if it was aught else than a pure fiction. Long before she imagined herself to have contributed so large a sum towards the relief of the starving Maltese, she wrote on the back of a copy of Nelson's second letter to the Emperor Paul, 'I not only received the deputies from Malta, but in a few hours I sent off three ships laden with corn, and got £7,000 from

20. I received the deputies, opened their dispatches, and without hesitation I went down to the port to try what could be done. I found lying there several vessels loaded with corn for Ragusa. I immediately purchased the cargoes and engaged the vessels to go with their loading and the deputies to Malta. This service Sir Alexander Ball in his letters to me as well as to Lord Nelson plainly states to be 'the means whereby he was enabled to preserve that important island.' I had to borrow a considerable sum on this occasion, which I have since repaid, and with my own private money thus expended, was nothing short of £5,000, not a shilling of which nor yet the interest have I ever received.

the Queen, and gave five hundred ounces' (*i.e.*, about £250 of English money) 'of my own to relieve them.' It is almost beyond belief that, in 1799, Emma Hamilton had £250 in store, or could have borrowed so much of money-lenders without pawning some of her jewels or other valuables. That she did *not* furnish the larger sum of £5,000 is proved by her own memorandum that she furnished only £250.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 21. (*a*) The Emperor Paul never heard of the affair, as set forth in Emma Hamilton's 'Statement.' The account of the affair, sent to the Emperor by Nelson, mentions Maria Caroline's donation of £7,000, but neither states nor suggests that Lady Hamilton had given any money for the relief of the starving Maltese. (*b*) The Emperor Paul's letter to Lady Hamilton, published in Pettigrew's 'Nelson,' vol. i, p. 328, contains no such passage. (*c*) The Emperor's message to Lord Whitworth —of which Emma Hamilton made so much—was nothing more than the ordinary official notification that the little Cross of St. John of Jerusalem had been conferred on her.—J. C. J.

21. The Emperor Paul, the Grand Master, on (*a*) hearing of this affair, wrote me a letter in his own hand, conferring on me the Cross of the Order, (*b*) 'that I not only saved the island, and that I was the link that kept together the opponents of the Common Foe!' and I was accordingly invested with the order with the usual ceremonies, along with Sir Alexander Ball. The Emperor, to shew yet further the value of this service, (*c*) sent to Lord Whitworth, then Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, requesting 'this honour might be registered in the King's College of Arms in my native country.'

Paragraph 22. (*a*) Lady Hamilton was greatly at fault in representing that she was at pains and charges to control and maintain a household at Naples in 1799, whilst maintaining another establishment at Palermo. After her migration with the court to Palermo, she had no establishment at Naples. During her stay in Naples Bay, from the 24th of June to the 5th of August, 1799, she lived on board the *Foudroyant*. (*b*) She made another slip in representing that she spent 'fourteen years' at the Court of the Two Sicilies in the condition and capacity of Sir William Hamilton's 'wife.' Her whole term of residence in Southern Italy and the island of Sicily exceeded fourteen full years by some months. But as she was married to Sir William Hamilton no earlier than the 6th of September, 1791, and took her final departure from the Sicilies in July, 1800, the whole time during which she figured as the British Ambassador's 'wife' at Maria Caroline's court was considerably less than *nine* full years. (*c*) By spending as little, and saving as much, as possible during her fourteen years' residence in Southern Europe, Emma Hamilton

22. Upon the re-taking of Naples in 1799, Nelson brought us back there, except the Queen. Sir William was yet so ill and feeble, as to be unfit for business, and yet less for the active bustle that those times required. From the beginning of June until the middle of August I was not only interpreter but secretary both to him and Nelson. I wrote for them from morning till night, translating whole papers and documents into various languages, that they neither could do themselves or procure any-one, proper to be entrusted with documents of so secret and confidential a nature. I had also to manage and controul the (*a*) households we were obliged to maintain at Palermo and Naples; and the numerous letters of Her Majesty to me at this period will prove the manner in which I conducted all these occupations, and the favourable light in which my attentions to the public cause was then considered. At this time in particular, but in fact for the (*b*) fourteen years that I was ambassador's wife at this court, I might have (*c*) exercised an economy that would have secured me provision for life; but such calculations I would

might doubtless have scraped together several hundreds of pounds; but no exercise of economy, however stringent, would have enabled the court beauty, with only £200 a-year of pin-money, to accumulate a sum that would have been an adequate provision for a woman of her tastes and keen appetite for pleasure. Readers may well smile at her statement that she spent her modest quarterly allowances to the last farthing, for the sake of George the Third's honour and her country's welfare.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 23. Apart from Lady Hamilton's bare and most suspicious statement, there exists no scrap of original evidence that Maria Caroline (who had already rewarded Emma for her 'services' and compensated her for her 'losses' with royal free-handedness) offered the adventuress this annuity. —J. C. J.

have thought a criminal prudence under the circumstances in which I was placed. My sole view was to maintain the dignity of our royal and beloved master, to advance his interests and wishes, and to soothe and alleviate the toils of his brave loyal seamen in a distant clime. In place of hoarding at such times and occasions, it was my sole pride, my glory, my ambition, thus to have expended what private friendships had bestowed for my own immediate comforts and use, as I have already shown, or, if further proofs be needed, I appeal to His Royal Highness the Duke of Sussex, to all the nobility, commanders, nay, to every Briton, that witnessed my unceasing zeal and efforts for their comfort and the public good, while at the courts of Naples and Palermo.

23. When Sir William was recalled from his embassy at Palermo in 1800, the Queen determined to travel with us as far as Vienna, to see her daughter, then Empress of Germany. Nelson also accompanied us. His lordship and Sir William were present at my parting with the Queen. At that affecting moment, Her Majesty put into my hands a paper, saying

it was the conveyance of a thousand pounds a-year, that she had fixed to invest for me in the hands of Freiz, the government bank at Vienna, this, she said, 'least by any possibility I should not be suitably compensated for the services I had rendered, the monies I had generously expended, and the losses I had so voluntarily sustained for the benefit of her nation and my own.'

Paragraph 24. For a reasonable view of this suspicious story, readers are referred to 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, pp. 172—174, where it is remarked, 'Readers may rest assured that it never entered the Queen's head to offer the annuity; that, if the annuity had been offered, Lady Hamilton would have accepted it with alacrity; and that the paper of conveyance, about which Dr. Pettigrew writes so curiously, has no place amongst historic evidences, for the simple reason that it never existed.' As Nelson had accepted a fine landed estate from Ferdinand, it is strange that Emma Hamilton, ever quick to take and even to ask for presents from her friends, declined this proffered annuity, on the

24. As I then stood, I thought the acceptance of such a reward from the Queen, circumstanced as she was, unworthy of a British heart. With every expression of respect and gratitude to Her Majesty, I destroyed the instrument, saying, 'England was ever just and to her faithful servants generous!' and that 'I would feel it insulting to my own beloved magnanimous sovereign to accept of meed or reward from any other hand.'

ground that by accepting it she would be insulting her own 'beloved magnanimous sovereign.'—J. C. J.

Paragraph 25. This paragraph is a good example of the insanely boastful strain, in which Emma used in her later years to descant on her influence over the historic persons, who had in former time cultivated her society from delight in her fascinating endowments, or employed her as an instrument in political business. To believe all she said of her influence over Nelson's fortunes and higher nature is to believe that, but for her, the hero would never have become the brightest glory of our naval history. According to her writing of his history, he would not have thrashed the French on the Egyptian coast, had she not, by a timely exercise of her supreme power over Maria Caroline, compelled the Queen to write the secret warrant. To accept her statements is to attribute it to her inspiring authority over his sluggish and spiritless soul, that he went to the Baltic like a man and won Copenhagen. To her disordered fancy it was certain that he would have avoided danger, shirked his duty, and remained in shame-

25. On our arrival in England, I did not cease my efforts to serve the country, and I trust effectually. It was in consequence of my earnest entreaties that Lord Nelson consented in 1801 to go to the attack of Copenhagen, second in command under Admiral Parker. Had he not been there, the Government must be sensible how very different would have been the result of that memorable engagement. Again in 1805 by my representations and entreaties, somewhat against his own notions and presentiments, I prevailed on him to offer himself to command the fleet then equipping to go against the combined fleets at Cadiz, which terminated in his last glorious but fatal victory of Trafalgar! If then either or both of these battles were gained by his superior zeal, vigilance, skill, and valour, I have proof that he would never have been at one or the other, but at my instance.

ful repose at Merton, had she not quickened his courage and sense of honour, and spurred him to go forth on his last and most glorious expedition. Had it not been for her, he would have gone neither to the Baltic nor to his fate at Trafalgar. 'I have proof,' wrote the sadly deteriorated beauty, 'that he would never have been at the one or the other but at my instance.' Fortunately Englishmen are under no obligation to believe the adventuress. It is also fortunate that her wildly boastful words are disproved by the sure facts of the Admiral's story. It cannot be gainsaid that he was set on going out against the combined fleets, and had said to Captain Blackwood on the 2nd of September, 1805, 'Depend upon it, Blackwood, I will yet give Monsieur Villeneuve a drubbing!', before Emma Hamilton was aware of his purpose or had a suspicion of the nearness of their next and final parting.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 26. (*a*) That she sold her jewels at the beginning of 1801 for 'the support' of her husband was another of Emma Hamilton's erroneous statements. Causing Nelson to believe the

26. (*a*) It was long after our return to England that Sir William was paid by the Government, in which [time] I sold my jewels at a heavy loss for his support. (*b*) He went on to the end of life in the

fiction, she taught other leaders of her party to credit the statement. So long as people interested themselves warmly in her affairs, it was the fashion of her admirers to speak of Lady Hamilton as a devoted wife, who had sold her personal ornaments to provide her husband with a home and the means to maintain it. The simple fact was that, in her impatience to establish herself in a fine Piccadilly mansion facing the Green Park, she sold her jewels in order to provide needful furniture for the showy house, as her husband refused to buy the furniture on credit, and could not pay for it with ready money till he should have sold a portion of his fine collection of pictures, antique vases, and other *objets d'art*. The furniture, bought with the proceeds of the jewels, was settled by deed, bearing date of 4th February, 1801, on Lady Hamilton, together with the works of art placed in the new house by Sir William Hamilton, who in his pension-for-life (eventually fixed at £1,200 a-year), and the rapidly rising rental of his Welsh estate, had a revenue that was more than sufficient for his dignified maintenance. Instead of losing by the transaction, full conviction that the pension would be continued to me, to a person who had gained so many points for the country, and for her fleets, which, he would say, was impossible for him or any other man to have gained; and in this expectation he was yet more confirmed by the language of his inseparable friend Nelson, (*c*) who ever would keep telling him, and indeed all the world, that the Battle of the Nile was Emma's, not his, and also assuring Sir William that he had (*d*) Mr. Pitt's solemn unequivocal pledge of honour that suitable provision should be made for me, and in corroboration of this fact, I appeal to the living testimony of Sir Walter Farquhar, to whom that great statesman (*e*) on his dying bed confirm'd those promises he had made Lord Nelson on my behalf, with his dying request that they may be fulfill'd by his successors.

Emma Hamilton was a large gainer by this 'sale of her jewels.' (*b*) Though he seems on his death-bed to have entertained a hope that his pension would be continued to his wife, Sir William Hamilton had been far from steadily confident during the previous two years that she would get a pension from the country. Though he thought her entitled to a pension of £500 a-year, his prevailing opinion was that she would not get any allowance from the nation. (*c*) If Nelson was so confidently hopeful, up to the hour of Sir William Hamilton's death, of getting a national pension for the diplomatist's widow, it is certain that soon after that event he was troubled by a doubt whether the country would make any provision at all for her. This trouble grew until, in despair of extorting the £500 a-year from the country, the Admiral consoled the adventuress for her disappointment, by leaving her a life annuity of that amount out of the revenue of his Bronté estate. (*d*) Apart from this incredible statement, there is no original evidence that Pitt ever made any such promise to Nelson, or that Nelson ever spoke of himself as

having received any such promise from the great statesman. Had Pitt ever made the promise, he would have kept it on returning to power in May, 1804. Nelson's letters afford superabundant evidence that he had no such cause for confidence in Pitt's beneficent design towards Lady Hamilton. Scarcely six months had passed since Pitt's return to power, when Nelson wrote in November, 1804, to Lady Hamilton, 'I do not believe that Pitt will give you a pension any more than Addington who[m] I supported to the last moment of his ministry.' (*e*) Even more amazing is the assertion, that Pitt on his death-bed 'confirmed those promises he had made Lord Nelson on Lady Hamilton's behalf, with his dying request that they might be fulfilled by his successors.' It is certain that Pitt was not troubled in his last hours by solicitations for Lady Hamilton's benefit. On the 9th of December, 1805, Sir George Rose wrote to Lady Hamilton, promising to take an early opportunity for moving Mr. Pitt, to provide for her in accordance with Nelson's solemn prayer in the famous so-called codicil, —a promise which would, of course, have been fulfilled,

had it not been for the premier's unanticipated illness and death. But, on the 27th January, 1806 (four days after Pitt's death), Sir George wrote again to Lady Hamilton, expressing his deep regret for having been compelled to forbear from troubling the minister about her business. 'On my seeing him' (*i.e.* Pitt) 'at Putney Heath,' wrote Sir George, 'I found him so ill as to preclude my talking to him on any business whatever; Sir Walter Farquhar, indeed, had positively prohibited anyone from doing so.'—For further particulars, touching the futile efforts of Lady Hamilton's 'friends' to get her a pension, *vide*, 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, pp. 258—265.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 27. The consequence of this appeal to Mr. Canning and Sir George Rose, and of averments in 'the petition' in support of which the 'Statement' had been written, was that both those statesmen withdrew their favour from Lady Hamilton, on the ground that she had written untruthfully of them, in the petition and the accompanying 'Statement.'—J. C. J.

27. And I also appeal to Mess^rs. Canning and Rose, to state if on behalf of the Government they had not reassured his lordship, on their taking leave of him on board the *Victory* at Portsmouth [on] the 14th September, 1805, on his last statement, [that] the promises made by Mr. Pitt in my favour should be fully realized.

Paragraph 28.

28. A disposition more avaricious and less love of country, than had been evinced by mine, might well have been buoy'd up by so many flattering pretensions and assurances of public remuneration with gratitude, and in proportion as Sir William felt their force as well as his unalterable faith in the justice of the country, so in proportion was his provision for me lessen'd, so that my title to public reward had caused me the loss of private fortune, that without such claims would have been left me by my husband, who in his latter moments, in deputing Mr. Greville to deliver the Order of the Bath to the King, desired he would tell His Majesty that he died in the confident hope that his pension would be continued to me for my zeal and services.

Paragraph 29. (*a*) In 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, c. xiii, readers may find a demonstration that the provision, made for Lady Hamilton by her husband and Lord Nelson, would under good management have yielded her a yearly income of £2,140, and that her rapid descent from this degree of enviable affluence to

29. Time has gone on. Thinking that my case could not be overlook'd, I felt easy. But the curtail'd provision, left me by Sir William, under the conviction of its being [made] an ample one by the country, has diminish'd without a semblance of (*a*) extravagance, and I now find myself in embarrassments, that imperiously press on me to

the financial condition, ordinarily styled 'straitened circumstances,' was largely due to her own flagrant personal extravagance. (*b*) Observe that Emma Hamilton now demanded a retrospective pension, with payment of arrears from the date of her husband's death.—J. C. J.

look for remuneration for those services, expenditures and losses that I have recited, and not alone for immediate support, but (*b*) as well for payment of that support for the time that I have been waiting in just expectation.

Paragraph 30.

30. In that expectation being liberally realized, I can have nothing but implicit confidence, 'as our august Prince' was well acquainted with it by Lord Nelson himself, and fully acquiesced in its justice.

Paragraph 31.

31. It may be here expected of me to state why the codicil to Lord Nelson's will, bequeathing my services to the justice of the country, was not produced with the will itself.

Paragraph 32. (*a*) Nelson's brother and family may have been Lady Hamilton's guests in December, 1805, when the memorandum, together with the Admiral's body, reached England; but, as Lady Hamilton was the guest of Dr. and Mrs. Nelson at Canterbury at the time of the battle of Trafalgar, she was at fault in writing words which imply that they had been living under her roof for *many months,* next preceding

32. When (*a*) Captain Blackwood (*sic*) brought it home, he gave it to the present Earl Nelson, who with his wife and family was then with me, and had indeed been living with me many months. To their son I was a (*b*) mother, and their daughter Lady Charlotte had been exclusively under my care for (*c*) six years. The Earl, afraid that I should be provided for in the sum that parliament was expected to

the earlier days of December, 1805. (*b*) In stating that she acted in the capacity of a mother to Dr. Nelson's only son, who had lived for the most part with his parents from the hour of Lady Hamilton's return to London in 1800, the imaginative adventuress stated what was inaccurate and absurd. (*c*) As the year 1801 had certainly opened before Dr. Nelson's daughter, Charlotte, made her first long sojourn under Lady Hamilton's roof, and Lady Hamilton did not return to England till November, 1800, the young lady cannot, in 1805, have been under Emma Hamilton's *exclusive care* for *six* years. (*d*) Instead of keeping the so-called codicil in his pocket, the first Earl Nelson took it to Doctors' Commons, showed it to Sir William Scott (a warm sympathizer with Lady Hamilton and strenuous supporter of her claims to a pension), and left it in the hands of Sir William Scott, judge of the Consistory Court, who held it in his keeping for the next seven weeks and five days. On taking the so-called codicil from the judge's hands, Earl Nelson, instead of keeping it in his pocket, carried the writing to the prime minister. For a clear and unanswerable grant to uphold the hero's name and family, kept the codicil in his (*d*) pocket until the day (*e*) £200,000 was voted for that purpose. *On that day* he dined with me in Clarges Street. Hearing at table what was done, he (*f*) took the codicil *out*, threw it to me, and said, with a very coarse expression, 'that I might do as I pleas'd with it.' I had it registered the next day at Doctors' Commons, where it rests for the national redemption.

demonstration that Nelson's clerical brother behaved quite honourably in respect to this writing, and was wholly innocent of the charge made against him by Lady Hamilton, *vide* 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, pp. 288—293. (*e*) The sum voted by parliament was £120,000, *not* £200,000. (*f*) Apart from Emma Hamilton's uncorroborated 'statement,' there is no original evidence that Earl Nelson was guilty of the alleged incivility to the woman whom he certainly treated with abundant courtesy and kindness during his famous brother's life, and seems to have treated in the same manner after the Admiral's death, until she forced a quarrel upon him.—J. C. J.

Paragraph 33.

33. The enthusiastic love of country, the bustle and promptitude necessary, on the various occasions recited, springing from an ardent mind could ill afford room for entertaining ideas of parsimony or precision of accounts, when such interests were at stake, public interests, interests of vital importance.

Paragraph 34. (*a*) Whilst there is no sufficient evidence that Emma Hamilton ever spent so much as a single

34. I may, however, without fear of exaggeration affirm (*a*) that my private funds in monies expended and

farthing out of her own pocket for the advantage of Great Britain, there is conclusive evidence that the payments which she in her later time declared herself to have made out of her private purse for England's good were, if not altogether imaginary, for the most part fanciful. (*b*) For whatever trifling losses she sustained through the revolutionary disturbances at Naples in 1798 and 1799, she was compensated lavishly by Maria Caroline. (*c*) Apart from the services which she rendered in the capacity of a confidential messenger between Maria Caroline and Sir William Hamilton, and as an obedient and efficient instrument in the hands of that queen, Emma Hamilton's achievements for her country's advantage were as unimportant, if not altogether imaginary, as the losses which she computed at £20,000.—J. C. J.

losses (*b*) sustained have suffer'd a diminution of £20,000. Had I hoarded these sums, that I must be permitted to say I generously expended for the honour and advantage of the country, I might at this hour have a competence independent of any remuneration for the (*c*) services I have quoted, and which I have no doubt the country would wish me to enjoy.—Emma Hamilton.

Because 'Lady Hamilton's Statement' is found on examination to be a tissue of inaccuracies, egregious exaggerations and pure fictions, it does not follow that she wrote it with the purpose of misleading its readers, in respect to the alleged services on which she based her claims to a pension. Some of the minor averments were no doubt put on the paper for deception.

For instance, the statement that she had figured as the British ambassador's wife for *fourteen years* at Maria Caroline's court must have been an intentional untruth; for it is beyond belief that she had forgotten in what position she stood towards Sir William Hamilton from the closing months of 1786 to the September of 1791. But I can believe her guiltless of deliberate untruth in respect to the principal inaccuracies of the autobiographical 'Statement.' Whilst acquitting her of intentional falseness in respect to these particulars, I am not unmindful of the facts which caused me to write of her in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' vol. ii, p. 242:

'Truthful as sunlight so long as she had lived hard by Paddington Green, ... the great lady, whose house stood in Piccadilly, told fibs without compunction, and told them so cleverly that people believed them, and persisted in extolling her candour and genuineness, notwithstanding all that was said against her. Deceiving her husband habitually, she sometimes practised on Nelson's credulity.'

But though nothing is more conspicuous and deplorable in the deteriorated Emma Hamilton than the loss of her early truthfulness, it is difficult to conceive that she was cognizant of the egregious inaccuracy of the more important allegations of the 'Statement.' For had she known them to be falsehoods, the very craft and cunning, which so often distinguished her words and actions during the rapid progress of her deterioration, would have saved her from inserting such manifest misstatements in a memoir, offered to the jealous scrutiny of official

persons. The presence of such obvious inaccuracies in a paper, which she knew would be studied with critical care and suspicion by her enemies in the public departments, is evidence that she believed the document to be substantially truthful.

In 1811, six years had passed since Nelson's death, eight years had passed since Sir William Hamilton's death, twelve years had passed since the rise and fall of the short-lived Parthenopeian republic, thirteen years had passed since Nelson's fleet watered at Syracuse, fifteen years had passed since the Spanish king wrote to his brother in Naples the letter, so strangely misrepresented in Lady Hamilton's 'Statement.' It is seldom that a human memory preserves the details of its principal recollections for even the shortest of these periods. Emma Hamilton had not been a keeper of diaries, by which she could revive the fading pictures of her remembrance, and correct the extravagances of her lively imagination. Moreover, from the date of her return to England in 1800 she had been hoping and praying, agitating and clamouring, for a pension,—showing cause, to herself and to her partisans, why she was entitled to remuneration for her 'losses' and reward for her 'services.' In 1811 she had for eleven years been spending much of her superabundant energy in magnifying her claims to public gratitude and national generosity. During so long a period of self-assertion and self-glorification, the fervid and emotional woman became so far the fool of her own fancy, as to mistake its flattering inventions for indisputable matters of fact.

Even to those, who realize most vividly her early

and peculiar aptitude for 'talking herself out of the true view of the proportions of things,' it may appear marvellous that Emma Hamilton thus came to regard herself as the patroness of her patrons, the controller of the persons whose orders she had been proud to obey, the maker of Nelson's greatness and the exemplary benefactress of Great Britain. But it is still stranger that, more than thirty years after her death, a biographer of Dr. Pettigrew's general intelligence and sobriety took the vain-glorious adventuress at her own valuation, and reproduced the fables of her amazing 'Statement' as pieces of veracious personal history. Had the too trustful doctor exercised his usual caution and acumen in weighing and testing Emma's averments, before weaving them into his 'Life of Nelson,' Mr. Paget, the 'Blackwood' essayist, would have been less certain that Lady Hamilton gave England the victory of the Nile, and less ready to 'recognize her as one to be placed in the world's history, with mingled pride and shame, beside Judith and Joan of Arc.'

CHAPTER III.

NELSON'S ENGLISH BIOGRAPHERS.

The Admiral's first and feeblest Biographer—Chief Purpose of Harrison's 'Life of Nelson'—Clarke and M'Arthur's official and authorized Biography—Its Merits and Defects—Southey's 'Life of Nelson'—'The Torrent of Abuse against Nelson'—Commander Jeaffreson Miles stems the Torrent—His 'Vindication of Nelson's Proceedings in the Bay of Naples'—Sir Harris Nicolas's Eulogy of the trenchant Essay—His more comprehensive and effectual Vindication of the same Proceedings—His infelicitous Memorandum touching Horatia's maternal Parentage—Mr. Haslewood taken at his own Valuation—Mr. Paget's Remarks on a Conflict of Opinion—Dr. Pettigrew's 'Life of Nelson'—Outcry against the Book—Merits and Demerits of the Work—A still surviving Sufferer from its Indiscretions.

No supremely great man of modern England has suffered more in posthumous fame than Nelson, from the incompetence or indiscretions of successive biographers. Written gracelessly, and put together hastily from insufficient sources of information, by an inexpert *littérateur*, whose chief aim in the performance was to support Lady Hamilton's claims to a public pension, Harrison's 'Life of Nelson' (1806) soon passed from general consideration, and was followed, at an interval of three years, by Clarke and M'Arthur's official and authorized 'Life of Admiral Lord Nelson, K.B., from His Lordship's Manuscripts'

(1809) in two cumbrous and costly quarto volumes, written in a style more likely to repel than gratify ordinary readers. Though they gave the public a large amount of sound information drawn from the records of the Admiralty and the Admiral's papers, these volumes are disfigured by serious mistakes.

Clarke and M'Arthur's book was followed all too soon by Southey's equally powerful and mischievous 'Life of Nelson.' Southey, as I remarked in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' was too conscientious a man to publish as true anything that he did not believe. But unfortunately he adopted in good faith the inventions of writers, wholly undeserving of confidence. At the present date, it is universally admitted, by dispassionate students of Nelson's career, that Southey was wholly at fault in his account of and judgment upon the two sets of incidents, which caused him to deal so unjustly with the Admiral's reputation. At this hour one would look in vain for an eminent English writer, capable of insisting, like Southey, that Nelson was guilty of crime in annulling Cardinal Ruffo's unauthorized treaty with the Neapolitan rebels, or that he compassed Francesco Caracciolo's death by unlawful means, because he had sunk so low as to be the besotted tool of a superlatively vicious and vindictive woman. Fifty years since the case was far otherwise. The direct consequence of Southey's reckless writing was, that for many years gratitude for Nelson's services was overborne by abhorrence of his alleged outrages on humanity. Decried on platforms as the barbarous violator of a solemn treaty,

and denounced by countless writers as Caracciolo's murderer, the Admiral appeared to the judgment of most educated Englishmen as nothing greater than a fortunate and unscrupulous naval adventurer, whose crimes had dishonoured the English nation.

The first person to use a pen effectually for stemming the torrent of slander, poured upon Nelson by Southey's followers, was no professional writer, though he displayed unusual literary address. A naval officer, who had served under Nelson in the Mediterranean, and participated in some of the occurrences so strangely misrepresented by the poet-laureate, Commander Jeaffreson Miles produced in 1843 his 'Vindication of Admiral Lord Nelson's Proceedings in the Bay of Naples,' the little book of sixty closely-printed pages, on which Sir Harris Nicolas based his more comprehensive and elaborate vindication of the slandered admiral. Correcting Southey's principal errors with scathing ridicule, Commander Miles at the same time administered chastisement to some of the writers who had misled the famous man of letters, and also to a few of the many calumniators who may be described as Southey's literary offspring. Demolishing the fictions of Miss Helen Maria Williams and the rancorous allegations of Captain E. J. Foote, he struck out right and left, and in every case effectually, at William James, Captain Brenton, Sir Archibald Alison, Lord Brougham and Sir James Mackintosh. It was Commander Jeaffreson Miles, who first called attention to Brenton's ludicrous slip, in making Emma Hamilton address Nelson by his Sicilian title, two months before the

dukedom of Bronté was conferred upon him. How precisely the naval veteran apprehended the difficulties of Nelson's position, during the period of his career that seemed most criminal to Southey, and how effectually he dealt with all the gravest charges against the Admiral's honour and humanity, readers may learn from the copy of Commander Miles's unfortunately 'rare' book, that is preserved in the library of the British Museum.

Appearing at a time, when Sir Harris Nicolas was editing the Admiral's papers, and gathering together the materials for his more complete and on some few points more effectual vindication of Nelson's conduct in the Bay of Naples (*vide*, 'Dispatches and Letters,' vol. iii, Appendix C, pp. 477,—523), Jeaffreson Miles's tract was of great service to the conscientious editor, who took occasion to extol it as a performance that did its author 'the more honour, as it was the first, and then the only attempt to stem the torrent of abuse against Lord Nelson.'

It would have been better for Sir Harris Nicolas's reputation had he resisted more stoutly the powerful influences that, four years after the appearance of his perfect vindication of Nelson's action towards Caracciolo and the rebels of Uovo and Nuovo, caused him to publish (*vide*, 'Dispatches and Letters,' vol. vii, pp. 369—396) the 'Memoir of Miss Horatia Nelson Thompson (now Mrs. Ward),' in which he was so indiscreet as to represent that Horatia should no longer be regarded as Lady Hamilton's daughter, because he had been authorized 'by Mr. Haslewood, long the confidential friend and professional adviser

of Lord Nelson, to declare, in the most positive manner, that Lady Hamilton was not the mother' of the Admiral's natural and adopted daughter. Readers do not need to be reminded how little right Mr. Haslewood had to speak of himself as the Admiral's 'confidential friend,' and how totally he was in error respecting Horatia's maternal parentage. That Sir Harris Nicolas attached far too much importance to the bare statement of the honest but aged solicitor can no longer be questioned. But in justice to the editor, who cannot be acquitted of serious indiscretion on a matter of considerable literary interest, it should be remembered that the testimony, which he put aside at the old lawyer's bidding, consisted chiefly of uncertain circumstantial evidence, and differed widely in value and conclusiveness from the sure and incontrovertible documentary evidence, by which Pettigrew was enabled to demonstrate that Horatia *was* the daughter of Nelson *and* Emma Hamilton.

The only Thomson-letters, that had come under Sir Harris Nicolas's inspection, when he surrendered to Mr. Haslewood's assertions, were letters that afforded no conclusive answer to the question in dispute. He had never seen the *conclusive* Thomson-letters written by Nelson to Lady Hamilton, portions of which were printed for the first time in Pettigrew's second volume. He had never read a line of the 'Now, my own dear Wife' letter that, without the congruent testimony of the Thomson-epistles would by itself settle the question, which Mr. Haslewood answered so wrongly. The difference between the evidence which caused Sir Harris Nicolas to deny, and the evidence which caused

Dr. Pettigrew to declare, that Mrs. Ward was Emma Hamilton's daughter, seems to have dropped from Mr. Paget's consideration, when he wrote in 'Blackwood's Magazine':

> 'The more closely the evidence is examined, the more perplexing does the inquiry' (*i.e.*, for Horatia's maternal parentage) 'become .... There cannot be a stronger proof of this difficulty than that which is derived from the fact that the two latest biographers of Nelson, both of whom have devoted infinite labour to the enquiry, have arrived at diametrically opposite conclusions. Dr. Pettigrew is convinced that Horatia was the daughter of Lady Hamilton, and Sir Harris Nicolas is equally convinced she was not.'

Had Sir Harris Nicolas and Dr. Pettigrew (both of them well qualified to sift and weigh conflicting testimony) arrived at their different conclusions *from the same evidence*, Mr. Paget's remarks would have been reasonable. But the different verdicts were given on different evidence. Whilst Sir Harris Nicolas arrived at his erroneous conclusion from inconclusive evidence, and had never enjoyed an opportunity of examining a single piece of Dr. Pettigrew's conclusively evidential documents, the last-named biographer was familiar with every item of Sir Harris Nicolas's inconclusive evidence, and also with every item of his own conclusive writings, no scrap of which had come to Sir Harris's knowledge when he recorded his erroneous verdict. Under these circumstances, the difference of the conclusions to which the two biographers came does not point to any such difficulty as Mr. John Paget indicates. In truth, the case affords no such difficulty. It is impossible for any two persons, competent to deal with questions

of testimony, to examine the whole evidence, or that main and sufficient part of the whole evidence which came under Pettigrew's consideration, without coming to the same conclusion.

There are grounds for the opinion that, if Sir Harris Nicolas had not published in 1846 the chapter entitled, 'Miss Horatia Nelson-Thompson (now Mrs. Ward),' which is so conspicuous an item of his seventh volume of the 'Dispatches and Letters,' the world would not have received a 'Life of Nelson' from Dr. Pettigrew's pen. The doctor had a strong taste for controversy; and it is certain that the desire to have the last word in the Horatia-Nelson controversy was one of the influences that determined him to produce another biography of the Admiral. The Messrs. Boone, of Bond Street, may also be supposed to have entertained the project for a new 'Life of Nelson', because the materials were at hand for settling the vexed question of Horatia's parentage, on which Sir Harris Nicolas was so manifestly in error.

Anyhow, Sir Harris Nicolas's seventh volume of the 'Dispatches and Letters' (with a title-page dated 1846, and a preface dated the 14th of May of that year) was followed at no long interval by Dr. Pettigrew's 'Memoirs of the Life of Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, K.B.,' (1849), containing, at the close of its second volume, supplementary memoirs of Lady Hamilton and Horatia Nelson,—a work that is far from faultless, but, with all its faults, deserved better treatment than it received from certain powerful critics. In society and the press, the new 'Life

of Nelson' caused a good deal of squabbling, in which the author was hotly assailed by Sir Harris Nicolas's partisans, and faintly commended by his own friends. In *The Times*, Samuel Phillips flew at the book, and tore it to pieces. In some quarters there was a strong feeling that Dr. Pettigrew deserved to be snubbed and suppressed, as an impertinent book-maker who had presumed to meddle with matters that were not his concern. According to the holders of this opinion, it was for the Nelson family to decide, when and how questions touching their honour should be raised for public discussion. People who secretly enjoyed the abuse poured on the first Earl Nelson, decried the biographer for assailing a peer of the realm with unmannerly vehemence. Mrs. Ward's friends spoke pathetically of the author's cruelty in proving her to be Emma Hamilton's daughter, when she was so desirous of passing for some other woman's offspring. It was averred by many of the doctor's censors that he had written his book from motives of personal animosity against the editor of the 'Dispatches and Letters,' and had outraged the feelings of all right-minded persons by speaking so plainly of the Admiral's attachment to his friend's wife. It was even suggested that the Thomson-letters and the 'Now, my own dear Wife' letter, by which he professed to have settled the vexed question of Horatia's parentage, were documents of no authenticity, and that, if he had not forged them with his own hand, he had at least connived at their spuriousness, whilst using them as weapons for controversy.

On the whole, the doctor had small reason to congratulate himself on having meddled with matters of Nelsonian polemics, and good grounds for thinking himself ill-used by the critics and tattlers. That he was ill-qualified to produce a satisfactory 'Life' of our greatest naval hero must be admitted, even by his most lenient judges. But a distinct and considerable service was rendered to our biographical literature by the personal historian whose translations of the most important of Maria Caroline's letters to Emma Hamilton enabled careful students to apprehend the relations of the Queen and the adventuress during the years of their closest intimacy. It may also be recorded, to Pettigrew's credit, that, had he only exercised proper caution in dealing with the allegations of 'Lady Hamilton's Statement,' his 'Life of Nelson' would have been a sound, although unsatisfactory, book.

From Pettigrew's incaution in dealing with those fanciful allegations, no writer has suffered more severely than the author of 'Nelson and Caracciolo' and 'Lady Hamilton' (*vide*, 'Blackwood's Magazine' for March and April, 1860),—the two essays that did so much to conciliate sentiment to Emma Hamilton, and to popularize the principal facts and arguments of Sir Harris Nicolas's masterly reply to Southey's charges against the Admiral.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. PAGET UNDER EXAMINATION.

The Two 'Blackwood' (1860) Articles—Sound Article on 'Nelson and Caracciolo'—Unsound Article on 'Lady Hamilton'—Sources of the Essayist's Facts and Arguments—Extraordinary Number of Errors in the Unsound Article—Critical Scrutiny of its Thirty-four Errors of Fact—The present Writer's Care for the Feelings of the anonymous Essayist—Mr. Paget's second 'Blackwood' (1888) Article on 'Lady Hamilton'—Extraordinary number of Errors in this second Article—Critical Scrutiny of its Errors of Fact—Passage of inexplicable Rigmarole in this second Article on 'Lady Hamilton'—The Essayist in Trouble—How he tried to get out of a Scrape—Mr. Paget's Series of Articles on Lord Macaulay's Inaccuracies—His unsuccessful Performance of an old Trick—A Question for Mr. Paget to Answer.

On reading in the magazine those two 'Blackwood' (1860) articles—the sound article on 'Nelson and Caracciolo' and the very unsound article on 'Lady Hamilton'—before writing 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' I was struck neither by the newness of the anonymous essayist's statements of fact nor by the originality of his arguments. It was manifest that, whilst the essay entitled 'Nelson and Caracciolo,' including the references to Martens and Klüber, which made so fine a show of jurisprudential erudition, was put together from Sir Harris Nicolas's vindication of the Admiral's conduct in the Bay of Naples, the essay on 'Lady Hamilton' consisted chiefly of matters

taken at second-hand from Commander Jeaffreson Miles's masterly tract, and matters taken directly from the unsoundest passages of Dr. Pettigrew's 'Life of Nelson.' On a closer examination of the paper on 'Lady Hamilton,' I came to the conclusion that accuracy was not one of the distinguishing merits of the essayist, who had written so tersely and trenchantly in behalf of the much slandered adventuress. How could I come to any other conclusion, when the essay offered to my consideration the errors of fact, set forth and commented upon in the following parallel columns?—

Editorial Comments on the Erroneous Passages of Mr. Paget's Essay ('Blackwood's Magazine,' 1860) on 'Lady Hamilton.'*	*Erroneous Passages of Mr. Paget's Essay ('Blackwood's Magazine,' 1860) on 'Lady Hamilton.'*
(1) The girl was born at least as early as 26th April, 1763. (2) She was not born at Preston but at Great Neston. (3) She was not a native of Lancashire, but of Cheshire. (4) Her parents were not named Lyons, but Lyon.—J. C. J.	'On the 26th of April, 1764,[1] at Preston [2] in Lancashire, [3] a girl was born of poor parents, of the name of Lyons.' [4]
(5) The child was not christened Emma but Amy, and had become a woman before she assumed the name of	'The father of Emma [5] Lyons died whilst she was an infant, and upon his death her mother removed from

* In order to give Mr. Paget the full benefit of his own amendments of the original essay, I deal in these parallel columns with the reprint of the article in 'Paradoxes and Puzzles,' the volume in which Mr. Paget reproduced (1874) his chief contributions to 'Blackwood's Magazine.'

Emma. (6) The widow Lyon did not migrate from Preston to Hawarden, but from Great Neston to Hawarden. (7) Hawarden is a *town*, not what is called a *village*.—J. C. J.

Preston[6] to the village[7] of Hawarden in Flintshire.'

(8) Pettigrew's more authoritative story is, that she figured in Graham's lecture-room as the 'Goddess of Health.' As the impersonator of the goddess *Hygeia* Amy Lyon would have worn a long robe. The fact is of some little moment, as Mr. Paget is at great pains to clear her of a charge of gross indelicacy, in exhibiting herself at the 'Temple of Health' without clothing,—a charge never made against her by any authoritative writer.—J. C. J.

'It has been confidently asserted that at this time she became connected with the infamous empiric Dr. Graham; that she was the woman who, under the name of 'Hebe Vestina,'[8] bore a part in his exhibition.'

(9) From extant documents it is certain that Amy Lyon came to London, to serve as nurse-maid in Dr. Budd's family, at least as early as the autumn of 1778. Consequently all Mr. Paget's argument, that is based on a false assumption, falls to the ground.—J. C. J.

'It follows that 1780[9] was the date of her employment as a nurse-maid in the family of Dr. Budd.'

(10) Emma was Mr. Charles Greville's mistress for just *four* years, *i.e.* from the early spring of 1782 to 14th of March, 1786. She did not live with him in that or any other capacity, for any longer time.—J. C. J.

'At the time of her introduction to Romney, Emma Harte was living with the Honourable C. Greville, a young man of high family and position; she resided with him for six or seven[10] years —his wife in everything

except in legal title to the name.'

'From 1782 till 1789, [11] Emma Harte continued to reside under the protection of Mr. Greville. In that year [12] he was compelled to break up his establishment, and to make arrangements with his creditors. Sir William Hamilton prevailed upon Emma Harte to accompany [13] him to Naples, where he had long resided as British Ambassador. There she remained for two [14] years, and in 1791 returned to London with Sir William Hamilton.'

(11) Emma did not live under Mr. Greville's protection from 1782 till 1789, but only from 1782 till 1786. (12) Mr. Greville was not compelled to break up his establishment in 1789. He broke up his Edgware Road home in the spring of 1786, and arranged matters with his creditors in the same year. (13) Sir William Hamilton did not prevail on Emma to accompany him to Naples in 1789. He had prevailed on her to come out to him at Naples, together with her mother, in 1786, under the escort of Mr. Gavin Hamilton. (14) In 1791, when she returned to London with Sir William Hamilton, she had resided at Naples for *five* years, instead of only *two* years.—J. C. J.

'Immediately after the marriage, Sir William and Lady Hamilton started for Naples. A letter from the unhappy Marie-Antoinette (said to have been the last she addressed to her sister) secured [15] her an introduction to the Queen, who soon admitted her to the closest intimacy and most complete confidence.'

(15) No letter, which Emma Hamilton conveyed from Marie-Antoinette to Maria Caroline, was accountable for her introduction to the last-named Queen.—J. C. J.

'The King of Naples had received from the King of Spain a private letter, com-

(16) As the King of Spain had many months since deserted the cause of the allies,

and had already written twice to Ferdinand on the subject, he certainly did not communicate his determination to make peace with France in the letter which announced his resolve to join the republic in war against England. (17) Sir William Hamilton was not dangerously ill at that time. A contemporary letter by Lady Hamilton shows him to have been in better health than usual. (18) Nor was he at that time unable to attend to his duties (*vide*, vol. i, pp. 321, 322 of this work). (19) Lady Hamilton did not pay anything like £400 for ensuring the safety of the letter, sent to Lord Grenville *by her husband*. She had no purse from which she could have taken any such sum at one time.—J. C. J.

(20) The number of English ships of war, under the provisions of the Franco-Sicilian treaty, alluded to by Mr. Paget, was *four* instead of two. (21) Far from being 'in urgent want of provisions and water' in June, 1798, as Mr. Paget represents, Nelson's ships were well provided with both water and victuals,—with water that held out till some day after the middle of the next month (July), and provisions sufficient for a still longer time, though whilst

municating his determination to desert [16] the cause of the allies, and to join France against England. Of this letter the Queen obtained possession, and communicated its contents to Lady Hamilton. Sir William was dangerously ill,[17] and unable to attend to his duties;[18] but Lady Hamilton immediately despatched a copy of the letter to Lord Grenville, taking the necessary means for insuring its safety,—a precaution which was attended with the expense of about £400, which [19] she paid out of her private purse.'

'It was in the month of June, 1798, however, that Lady Hamilton performed the act which entitles her to the lasting gratitude of all who feel pride in the glory of the British navy. Naples was at peace with France. One of the stipulations of the treaty was, that no more than two [20] English ships of war should enter into any of the Neapolitan or Sicilian ports. Nelson was in pursuit of the French fleet, but in urgent want of provisions and water.[21]

watering his squadron at Syracuse in July (*not* June, Mr. Paget!) he availed himself of the opportunity for taking in a fresh supply of light victuals. (22) Observe how Mr. Paget represents that in June, 1798, when Sir Horatio Nelson can scarcely be said to have entered on his first pursuit of the French armament, the Admiral spoke of being compelled by want of provisions to run immediately for Gibraltar, and give up *all further pursuit* of the French fleet. (23) Maria Caroline did not get admission to the Council on giving birth to a son, by virtue of 'the laws of Naples,' but by force of a special stipulation of her marriage contract. (24) Nelson did not, as Mr. Paget asserts, water and victual his ships at Syracuse, in June, 1798, but between the 20th and 23rd (inclusive) of July, 1798. He did *not*, as Mr. Paget asserts, water and victual his ships at Syracuse for his second and glorious voyage to Egyptian waters, before making his first futile trip to those waters. On all these points, no less than on the points touching the Spanish king's letter, Mr. Paget was misled (as an historical essayist should not have been misled) by Dr. He despatched Troubridge to Sir William Hamilton, urging upon him to procure permission for the fleet to enter Naples or one of the Sicilian ports, as otherwise he should be compelled to run to Gibraltar for supplies, and to give over all further pursuit [22] of the French fleet. Troubridge arrived at Naples about six o'clock in the morning, and instantly called up Sir William Hamilton. They went to the Neapolitan minister, Acton. A council was summoned, at which the feeble and vacillating King presided . . . . The King dared not break with France. The application was refused . . . . . The little barefooted girl of the Welsh village and the daughter of Maria Theresa of Austria had met. The time which Sir William Hamilton, Troubridge, and Acton had vainly spent in attempting to move the King, had been passed by Lady Hamilton with the Queen, who, having given birth to a son, was by the laws of Naples [23] entitled to a voice in the State Council. By the most vehement entreaties and arguments, she obtained her signature to an order addressed 'to all governors of the Two Sicilies, to receive with hospitality the

Pettigrew, who was himself befooled on the same points by the romantic fables of 'Lady Hamilton's Statement.' —J. C. J.

(25) The Rev. William Nelson's daughter Charlotte had not been under Lady Hamilton's care for six years. The whole time of her residence with Lady Hamilton was less than five years. (26) Instead of suppressing the so-called codicil, the first Earl Nelson took it with him to Doctors Commons, and showed it to Sir William Scott (a strenuous supporter of Lady Hamilton's claim to a pension), left it for several weeks in Sir William Scott's keeping, and then took it to the prime minister before the grant was voted by Parliament.—J. C. J.

(27) The Rev. William Nelson neither fawned, nor crawled, nor grovelled before Lady Hamilton, nor offered her fulsome flattery and abject adulation. He merely treated her with such cordiality and confidence as would have been appropriate had she been his brother's wife. In justice to Lady Hamilton it should be observed that he would not have commended himself to her favour by abject sycophancy.—J. C. J.

British fleet, to water, victual, and aid them . . . . Armed with this authority, Nelson entered the port of Syracuse, victualled and watered his fleet, [24] and fought and won the Battle of the Nile.'

'The codicil was faithfully delivered by Captain Blackwood to the Rev. William Nelson, who, with his wife and family (one of them a daughter, who had been under her exclusive care for six [25] years), was residing with Lady Hamilton. He suppressed [26] it until the day when £120,000 was voted by parliament to uphold the name and title of the hero, when, dining at Lady Hamilton's table, he produced it; and, throwing it to her, coarsely said, she might now do with it as she pleased.'

'It is difficult to find words to express the meanness of Nelson's brother. He fawned, he crawled, he grovelled; no flattery was too fulsome, no adulation too abject,[27] to express his devotion to Lady Hamilton so long as she was powerful and prosperous.'

'No sooner had he secured for himself the wealth and honours earned by Nelson, than he was the first to betray and desert [28] her.'

(28) The first Earl Nelson neither betrayed Lady Hamilton in any matter, nor in any proper sense of the word deserted her. That he withdrew from her after his brother's death, was due to her hostile action towards him.—J. C. J.

'Her' [*i.e.*, Lady Hamilton's] 'husband, with his dying breath, bore witness that, during "the ten years of their happy union, she had never, in thought, word, or deed, offended him." '[29]

(29) If Sir William Hamilton bore any such witness with his dying breath, he spoke untruly. An extant document in Sir William Hamilton's own writing, which appears in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' proves that, after her return from Italy to England, Emma Hamilton offended her husband so greatly that he had serious thoughts of separating from her.—J. C. J.

'She' [*i.e.*, Lady Hamilton] 'fled to Calais, and, soon after her arrival, wrote the following letter to the Right Hon. Geo. Rose . . . . . This letter, it will be observed, is dated [30] the 4th of July, 1813. In eighteen [31] months more the strange, eventful life of Emma Hamilton was over.'

(30) As Emma Hamilton has been proved by a letter, printed in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' to have been living at No. 12, Temple Place, within the rules of the King's Bench Prison, on the 31st of July, 1813, she certainly cannot have written from Calais to the Right Hon. George Rose on the 4th of July, 1813, after her flight to that town. The letter to the Right Hon. George Rose was probably dated on the 4th of July, 1814. (31) The precise length of Lady Hamilton's stay at

Calais—where she died on the 15th of January, 1815—is unknown, but it certainly fell short of eighteen months, and seems to have been less than nine months.— J. C. J.

(32) As Lady Hamilton died in the Catholic faith, and in her last moments received the ministrations of a Catholic priest, there was no search made for a Protestant clergyman to officiate at her interment. (33) As she was buried in accordance with the Catholic rite, no Irish half-pay officer read the Anglican service for the dead over her grave.—J. C. J.

'Not a Protestant clergyman was to be found [32] in Calais, and the solemn service for the dead was read over her grave by an Irish half-pay officer.'[33]

(34) As he was neither Lady Hamilton's executor, nor her next of kin, nor the attorney of her executors, Earl Nelson did not hasten to Calais, on hearing of her extreme illness, in order 'to demand this property!', but mainly in order to look after his brother's natural daughter, who was with her mother at the time of her death.—J. C. J.

'The Rev. Earl Nelson came over to demand [34] this property' [*i.e.*, the trifling effects that belonged to Lady Hamilton at the time of her death]!

The essay, which has been scrutinized for the purpose of detecting its numerous errors of fact, occupies twenty-four of the not closely printed pages of Mr. Paget's 'Paradoxes and Puzzles' (1874), but much of the article consists of quotations from letters and documents. The original writing of the composition falls something short of seventeen full

pages. It follows that on an average every page of original writing contains *two* errors of fact,—some of the thirty-four errors of fact being serious mistakes, whilst the smallest of them are of some importance. Of course the essayist may plead, in palliation of the amazing number of his errors, that he was not so fortunate as to have access to the letters and other documents published in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.' But this plea cannot be urged in respect either to the majority, or to the most serious of his faulty allegations. Even when the fullest allowance has been made for him on the score of the poverty and badness of his materials, the clever and trenchant essayist cannot be acquitted of extreme carelessness and, in respect to some few matters, of unusual ignorance.

Whilst examining the essay on Lady Hamilton, and also whilst writing my memoir of the famous beauty, I was not aware of the essayist's name. The article was published anonymously in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and I had never seen or heard of the volume, in which it was reprinted. But I remembered how serviceable the sound article on 'Nelson and Caracciolo' had been to the Admiral's reputation, by making the principal facts and arguments of Sir Harris Nicolas's reply to Southey's charges more widely known, and how much the egregiously unsound, though distinctly clever, article on Lady Hamilton had done to make the world think tenderly of her. Under these circumstances I felt for the essayist who, notwithstanding the multitude of his mistakes, had done good service in the cause, for

which I was about to dip my pen in ink. Prudence forbade me to be altogether silent about the unsoundness of the inferior essay, for it was obvious that the silence would cause some of my critics to produce the errors of the article as evidence against the true statements of my book. But, whilst it would be easy for me to discharge the functions of a destructive critic in a manner that would be extremely offensive, I could with less ease effect my purpose in a way that would be comparatively inoffensive to the faulty essayist, should he have survived the labours of 1860 by more than a quarter-of-a-century, and be still sensitive to human praise and blame.

I determined to do my work in the more difficult and merciful manner. Far from exulting over his blunders, I treated him with forbearance. Saying as little as possible of his errors, I seized every opportunity for commending his literary address. Whilst showing how his whole argument respecting Amy Lyon's alleged connection with the *Temple of Health*, 'fell with a clatter, like a house built with cards, before the fact that she came to London considerably earlier than he was aware,' I spoke of the 'characteristic cleverness and force' with which he argued on a false assumption. Speaking of the sound article on 'Nelson and Caracciolo'—sound, because the essayist held closely to the facts and arguments of Commander Jeaffreson Miles and Sir Harris Nicolas—I remarked that 'if I knew the essayist's name, I should mention it, with the admiration and gratitude due to a writer, who did much to remove the two

darkest stains put upon the whiteness of Nelson's fame by Southey's biting and too hasty pen.' Could I have said more in the way of honest civility to the essayist, who had only popularized the facts and arguments of previous writers?

On reading 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' Mr. Paget formed a low opinion of the book, which exhibits the unsoundness of his article, that had long been authoritative to persons interested in Emma Hamilton's character and career; and he lost no time in getting access to Mr. Morrison's Nelson-Hamilton MSS., in order that he might ascertain whether the letters and other documents, published in my book, were genuine writings, and whether I had copied them correctly. In taking this step, Mr. Paget rendered me a service, for which I now offer my thanks. Having no desire to be treated as Dr. Pettigrew was treated by the people who charged him with publishing spurious letters, I was careful to declare the possessor of the manuscripts published in my book, and also to say that I had transcribed them with my own hand. Whilst taking this precaution against the kind of persons, who did their best to destroy Dr. Pettigrew's reputation for honesty, I hoped that some reputable and independent man of letters would inspect the originals of my printed manuscripts, and bear testimony to the authenticity of the writings and accuracy of my printed transcripts of them.

In respect to Mr. Paget's visits to the present resting-place of the Morrison MSS., I only regret that the visits were so few and brief, and that through

the haste and insufficiency of his examination of the Nelson-Hamilton writings, he should have failed to get a view of some of the most interesting evidences of the collection, and—what is more curious—should have closed his researches under the impression that the collection comprised matters of documentary evidence, that are not and never were amongst the papers.

To gather evidence from letters, the student should read them carefully and deliberately. Instead of merely dipping here and there into the not easily legible writings, the manipulator of epistles for biographical use should read them line by line. Never thinking it enough to have gathered the general purport of a packet of letters, he should pause to decypher passages in perplexing penmanship, and be ever on the alert to discover the precise meaning of obscure sentences in one epistle from the clearer wording of other epistles. Few kinds of literary labour require a larger measure of vigilance, discrimination and patience, than the labour by which the biographer gathers the minute details of a domestic story from a lot of old letters. Had Mr. Paget studied the Nelson-Hamilton papers with microscopic regard for the finest filaments and minute points of evidential matter, he would not have made certain rather droll mistakes in an article, to which I shall soon call attention.

How low an opinion Mr. Paget formed of my 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson,' he told the readers of 'Blackwood's Magazine' (*vide* the No. for May, 1888), in an article which contains a few passages

that should not be overlooked by any future historian of the 'amenities' of literature. As I am under no obligation to answer them, and have no disposition to be needlessly hard on the writer, whose sensibility I did my best to spare, no further reference shall be made to those old-fashioned 'amenities.' But, as I am under a kind of obligation to the readers of my memoir of Lady Hamilton to take all reasonable means and occasions for preserving them from misconception respecting the adventuress, Mr. Paget must pardon me for bringing under their notice his latest crop of biographical inaccuracies:

Editorial Comments on Erroneous Passages of Mr. Paget's second Essay in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' (1888), on Lady Hamilton.	*Erroneous Passages of Mr. Paget's second Essay in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' (1888), on Lady Hamilton.*
(1) According to the Calais record of her death, by which Mr. Paget pretends to get at the year of her birth, Lady Hamilton was born in 1763. She was certainly born as early as April 26th, 1763, and was perhaps born a year or two earlier.—J. C. J.	'We shall find, as we proceed, that we are enabled to do this year by year almost without intermission, from the hour of her' [*i.e.*, Lady Hamilton's] 'birth in 1764,[1] to that of her death in the year 1815.'
(2) Even if it could be shown that she kept her birthday on the 26th of June, one does not see how that fact would afford evidence of her having been born in 1764. But Mr. Paget is wrong as to the day. Throughout her	'This certificate' [*i.e.*, the certificate of Amy Lyon's baptism, published in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson'], 'combined with the fact that her birthday was habitually kept[2] on the 26th June, and the statement[3] in the

career, in London, at Naples, at Merton, Lady Hamilton kept her birthday and received birthday presents and congratulations on the 26th of April, *not* on the 26th of June. The evidence to this point in the Morrison MSS. is redundant. (3) The Calais evidence that she was fifty-one years of age at the time of her death on the 15th of January, 1815, is evidence that she was born in 1763, whether her birth occurred in April (as it *did*), or in June, as Mr. Paget erroneously states. Had she been born in April or in June, 1764, she would have been only fifty years old on the day of her death. Mr. Paget is wrong in thinking that babies are born a full year old. (4) She may have been, and probably was, born a year or two earlier; but it is certain that Amy Lyon was born at least as early as the 26th of April, 1763, instead of the 26th of June, 1764.—J. C. J.

(5) Dr. Pettigrew does not say so. He only says, 'She was first engaged in the capacity of nursery-maid in the family of Mr. Thomas of Hawarden,' without naming the county. (6) Instead of being a mere village, Hawarden is a town. (7) Hawarden is in Flintshire, *not* in Cheshire.—J. C. J.

archives of Calais that she was fifty-one at the time of her death, seem to establish pretty conclusively that her birth took place [4] at Neston in Cheshire, in 1764, and not, as has been generally supposed, at Preston in Lancashire.'

'We learn from Dr. Pettigrew [5] that at an early age she was engaged as a nursery-maid in the family of a Mr. Thomas of Hawarden, a village [6] in Cheshire, [7] since made famous as the place from which Mr. Gladstone issues his post-cards and distributes his chips.'

(8) Dr. Pettigrew does not seem to do so. He and the anonymous author tell different stories. Whilst the anonymous author intimates that Amy displayed herself without clothing in Dr. Graham's lecture-room, Dr. Pettigrew says that she figured there as the 'Goddess of Health,' in which character she would have worn clothing. —J. C. J.

* In this singular piece of rigmarole Mr. Paget seems to aim at arguing that Amy Lyon cannot have served Dr. Graham in the alleged manner, because so short a time elapsed between her retirement from Dr. Budd's family and some other incident, which the essayist omits to mention. No one knows precisely how old Amy was on entering Dr. Budd's service, or the date of her admission to the doctor's family, or how long she served him, or the date at which she ceased to serve him, or how old she was on withdrawing from his roof. But as Mr. Paget *now* puts her birth at least one year and two months later than a date at which she was certainly living, he is scarcely the man to give a sound opinion as to her age when she ceased to serve the phy-

'As to this' [*i.e.*, Amy's course of life after she left the service of Dr. Budd] 'Dr. Pettigrew does not profess to have any personal knowledge, and seems [8] to have adopted without inquiry the statements contained in an infamous and anonymous publication called the "Memoirs of Lady Hamilton."'

* 'It is enough to say that there is not the slightest trace of even a particle of authority for these statements' [*i.e.*, that Amy Lyon was for a time in Dr. Graham's service; and that during her association with him she figured as the 'Goddess of Health' in the public lecture-room], 'and that the very short time which elapsed between her leaving the service of Dr. Budd, when she could not be less than sixteen or seventeen, and the fact that during that period she must have been residing for some time with Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh, as his mistress, render their existence (*sic*) practically impossible.'

sician. What does Mr. Paget mean by 'render their existence practically impossible'? Whose existence? Mr. Paget can scarcely mean the 'existence of the statements.' But if he does not mean that, what can he mean? I call attention to this perplexing sentence as an example of the essayist's latest style, so different from his manner of writing in 1860. What was the editor of 'Blackwood' about when he allowed such a piece of slatternly and inexplicable rigmarole to appear in a magazine which is still read by a good many educated people?—J. C. J.

(9) Sir Harry Fetherstonehaugh did not seduce Amy Lyon, but only took her for a mistress after she had been seduced by some other man. (10) As she was living on the 26th of April, 1763, Amy Lyon was at least something over eighteen years and eight months old at the beginning of January, 1782. —J. C. J.

(11) The child, whose advent was anticipated in Mr. Greville's letter, was *not* the child who figures in Amy Lyon's subsequent story as

'Of the circumstances attending her' [*i.e.*, Amy Lyon's] 'seduction [9] by Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh we have no evidence; but in January 1782, when not eighteen years of age,[10] we find her residing with her grandmother, a woman of the name of Kidd, at Hawarden, cast off in the most heartless and cruel manner by Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh, penniless, and expecting in a short time to become a mother.'

'As soon as the child whose advent was anticipated in Mr. Greville's letter had made its appearance (we shall hear of it again under the

'Little Emma.' Nothing is known of the child, 'whose advent was anticipated in Mr. Greville's letter.' It is not even known whether it was born alive. As Sir Harry Fetherstonehaugh and Lady Hamilton were on friendly terms in her later years (which neither of them would have cared to be, had he seduced her, discarded her without cause, and then contributed nothing towards the maintenance of their child), the fair inference is that, if the child was born alive, Sir Harry Fetherstonehaugh made due provision for it. The 'Little Emma' of Amy Lyon's subsequent story was Amy's first-born child, by some other man than Sir Harry Fetherstonehaugh. (12) There is no tittle of evidence, either in the Morrison MSS. or anywhere else, that the child 'anticipated in Mr. Greville's letter' was even for a moment in the charge of Dame Kidd. (13) Nor is there any tittle of evidence that Amy's second accouchement took place at Hawarden, before she returned to London in the beginning of 1782. On the contrary, there is strong presumptive, though not conclusive, evidence that it took name of 'Little Emma')[11], and been safely consigned to the care of her grandmother Kidd, [12] she' [*i.e.*, Amy Lyon] 'proceeded [13] to London.'

place in London. For this cluster of mistakes Mr. Paget is wholly without excuse, as he had read in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson' the letters, and subsequently examined the original MSS. of the letters, written by Emma Hart in June, 1784, to Mr. Greville, in which 'Little Emma' is spoken of *as* 'a great romp,' whom her mother 'can hardly master,' as a child who sends 'her duty' to her mother's benefactor, *as* a 'giddy wild girl . . . . as wild and thoughtless as somebody' (*i.e.*, her mother) 'when she was a little girl,' *as* a talkative and boisterous child who 'speaks countrified,' *as* a child who is on the point of being sent to a preparatory boarding-school, and *as* a child who, after coming to her mother's home in the Edgware Road, was 'always wondering why' Mr. Greville 'did not come home.' When 'Little Emma' was thus described, the child, 'whose advent was anticipated in Mr. Greville's letter,' would, if alive, have been about two years and four months old. Mr. Paget's notions about infants are curious. He thinks that they are born a year old, and are ready for boarding-school when they are two years old.—J. C. J.

'At the expiration of his leave of absence, Sir William Hamilton returned to Naples deeply enamoured of his nephew's mistress. Little Emma was sent to school and well provided for; the establishment at Edgware Row continued.'

(14) Instead of being mere matters for conjecture and inference from subsequent events, the arrangements made between the uncle and nephew for Emma's future are exhibited most precisely in certain papers preserved in the Morrison MSS. At the time of Mr. Paget's careless and desultory inspection of the Morrison MSS., all these papers touching 'this subject' were kept in the same folio, which was as accessible to Mr. Paget as the other folios of the collection. But I have authority for saying that Mr. Paget did not even untie the strings of this particular folio. The negociations, exhibited in these papers, are fully and precisely and accurately set forth in 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.' For his great mistake on this point Mr. Paget is without excuse.—J. C. J.

'Towards the end of 1785 Mr. Greville's affairs became hopelessly embarrassed. A break-up of his establishment and a separation from Emma became inevitable. What communications had taken place between the uncle and the nephew upon this subject can only be guessed at [14] from the events which subsequently occurred; but at this time a letter arrived from Sir William Hamilton containing an invitation to Greville, Emma, and her mother to join him at Naples.'

(15) The stipulation was that no more than *four* English ships of war should enter into any of the Neapolitan or Sicilian ports.—J. C. J.

'The Court of Naples at that time had made peace with the Government of France, and had entered into a treaty, one of the stipulations of which was "that no more than two [15] English ships of war should enter into any of the Neapolitan or Sicilian ports."'

(16) The authenticity of the letter is certain; but it is

'On the 17th June,' [*i.e.*, 1798] 'Nelson was in the Bay

not a fact that 'its genuineness cannot be doubted without charging deliberate forgery on Dr. Pettigrew'; it being obvious that, even if the letter had been proved a forgery, it would have been more reasonable to regard the honourable man of letters as the victim than as the fabricator of the spurious document. The epistle, no doubt, seems to have been written, as Mr. Paget represents, after Troubridge's return from Naples to Nelson's squadron, lying off Capri. But it does not follow that 'the Queen's letter,' to which Nelson alludes, was *the order* for watering and victualling. It is more probable that the Queen's letter, kissed by Nelson, was the undated letter from Maria Caroline to Lady Hamilton (*vide*, vol. i, pp. 338, 339 of this work), which I am strongly disposed to think was written by Maria Caroline, whilst Troubridge was at Naples in June, 1798, in order that it should be conveyed by him to Nelson, who had entered Sicilian waters in her interest, and was on the point of leaving them for her advantage.—J. C. J.

of Naples with the fleet, and for the purpose of obtaining, if possible, a relaxation of this stipulation, and permission to victual and water his fleet at a Sicilian port, he despatched Troubridge to Sir William Hamilton with the following letter. [After repeating his earlier (*i.e.*, 1860) account of the way in which Emma Hamilton represented herself to have extorted *the order* for victualling at Syracuse from the reluctant Maria Caroline, Mr. Paget's narrative proceeds thus]: 'On receiving this order from Troubridge, Nelson wrote to Lady Hamilton the following letter, of which Dr. Pettigrew gives a *facsimile* copy in the peculiar left-handed writing of Nelson. The genuineness of this document cannot be doubted without charging [16] deliberate forgery on Dr. Pettigrew.

"My Dear Lady Hamilton,—

"I have kissed the Queen's letter. Pray say I hope for the honour of kissing her hand when no fears will intervene. Assure Her Majesty that no person has her felicity more at heart than myself, and that the sufferings of her family will be a tower of strength in the day of battle. Fear not the event; God is with us. God bless you and Sir William. Pray say I cannot stay to answer his letter.

"Ever yours faithfully,

"Horatio Nelson.

"17th May, 6 p.m."

'This letter is erroneously dated. It was evidently written after Troubridge's return, when he brought at the same time the tidings of the failure of himself and Sir William Hamilton with the King, and the success of Lady Hamilton with the Queen.'

'In another letter to Lady Hamilton, Nelson says [17]:—"If I gain a battle it shall be called *yours* and the *Queen's*, for to you I will owe my success; without this, our returning to Gibraltar was decided on."'

(17) As he has no better authority for representing that Nelson wrote these words to Lady Hamilton than Dr. Pettigrew's reproduction of one of the questionable allegations of 'Lady Hamilton's Statement,' Mr. Paget errs in averring positively that the words were written by Nelson.—J. C. J.

(18) Besides being an avowal of startling ignorance, this 'We-are-not-aware' sentence is a statement that the fact has never been disputed. In a former chapter of this work (*vide*, vol. i, pp. 351—355) I have shown how the fact was doubted by Sir Harris Nicolas, disputed by Professor Laughton, and questioned by other persons. (19) In 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson' I produced much weighty evidence that Emma Hamilton was only the Queen's agent and instrument, doing what Maria Caroline ordered her to do, for the assistance of the

After quoting the words of the famous so-called codicil, in which Nelson attributed the Queen's action in 'causing letters to be wrote to the Governor of Syracuse, &c.,' to Lady Hamilton's influence with Her Majesty, Mr. Paget says, 'We are not aware that the fact so solemnly and conclusively stated by Nelson has ever been disputed.[18] Yet now, more than eighty years after the event, Mr. John Cordy Jeaffreson . . . . has the audacity to assert, without one particle of evidence[19] to support him, that "had she" [Lady Hamilton] "never been born, Nelson's

British fleet, the information of the British government, and the furtherance of Her Majesty's policies. Ruling persons experience little difficulty in finding instruments to execute such orders as Emma Hamilton received from the Queen, who, in Emma's absence, would not have been at loss for as good a channel of communication with Sir William Hamilton and Nelson. In support of this view of Emma's relation to the Queen who used her, I produce additional evidence in the present work. (20) Far from affecting to know more than Nelson knew about the affairs of his fleet, I argue that Nelson must be a conclusive authority as to all matters of the fleet under his command. But Lady Hamilton's relation to the Queen was not one of those matters, and the documentary evidence is conclusive that the Admiral was mistaken about it, just as he was mistaken in thinking 'Little Horatia' was Emma's first-born child.—J. C. J.

(21) It is no matter of mere opinion, but a matter of fact, that, as I show Emma Hamilton to have been no originator and designer of the migration from Naples to Palermo, but only an instru-

ships would have watered and victualled just as readily at Syracuse."' On the strength of this expression of my opinion Mr. Paget charges me with affecting to 'know[20] more about the proceedings of the English fleet in the Mediterranean at that period than Lord Nelson.'

Mr. Paget charges me with inconsistency[21] in saying in the first place, 'It is at least conceivable that,' if they had not retired in 1798 from Naples to Palermo, 'Ferdinand and Maria Caroline

ment in the affair who did nothing for effecting the movement, which in her absence could not have been effected by Saverio or some of Maria Caroline's other instruments, I am guilty of no inconsistency in saying that the King and Queen might have died on the scaffold had they remained at Naples, and also saying it is absurd to credit Emma Hamilton with having saved Maria Caroline and Ferdinand from death by the executioner. Nelson of course took another and more romantic view of the part played by Lady Hamilton in the movement of the court. But Nelson (a great man on one side of his character, and a babe on the other, as Lord Minto remarked) was in this business the mere echo of Emma's boastful account of her own doings.—J. C. J.

(22) As she was living within the rules of the King's Bench Prison on 31st July, 1813, and celebrated the anniversary of the victory of the Nile at No. 12, Temple Place, within the rules of the prison, with 'a few sincere and valuable friends,' on the following day, Emma cannot have taken refuge at Calais in that month. She fled to Calais in the spring or summer of 1814.—J. C. J.

would, like Louis and Marie-Antoinette, have died by the executioner,' and then saying in the second place of Lady Hamilton, 'She no more saved Maria Caroline and Ferdinand from the guillotine than she consigned Louis and Marie-Antoinette to death.'

'She' [*i.e.*, Lady Hamilton] 'took refuge at Calais[22] in July, 1813.'

(23) Emma Hamilton does not appear to have ever occupied a cell of the King's Bench prison. During her detention she lived in comfortable rooms at No. 12, Temple Place, outside the prison but within its rules. (24) In Lady Hamilton's time the prison was, of course, styled the King's Bench Prison.—J. C. J.

(25) Marie-Antoinette was executed on 16th October, *not* 16th November, 1793.—J. C. J.

'We have traced it' [*i.e.*, Emma Hamilton's career] 'without fear or favour from the lowly cottage on the banks of the Dee, through the royal palaces of Naples, the splendid saloons of London, the cells[23] of the Queen's[24] Bench Prison, the exile's lodging at Calais, to the unmarked grave in the timber-yard.'

'The world owes it to her' [*i.e.*, Lady Hamilton] 'that the sister of Marie-Antoinette did not share her horrible fate—that another head, as fair as that which fell into the basket of sawdust in front of the Tuileries[25] on 16th November, 1793, did not roll on the scaffold at Naples in 1799.'

Occupying twenty-nine columns of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' the slight article, which yields these twenty-five errors of fact, is made up largely of documents and extracts from documents, and does not comprise more than ten pages of original writing. The average number of blunders *per* page of original writing is, therefore, fractionally higher in this second article, written from sifted and perfect materials, than in the former article (1860) on Lady Hamilton, which was written in some degree from defective materials and erroneous data. But as an ordinary 'Blackwood' page of original writing contains more words than a page of original writing

in 'Paradoxes and Puzzles,' the later article may be adjudged as neither more nor less inaccurate than the earlier essay. Printed in the ordinary pages of books of history, the original matter of the essays yields about two errors of fact *per* page. At this rate of blundering, a single volume of five hundred pages by Mr. Paget would yield *one thousand errors of fact!* I am not aware of any living author who can be said to surpass Mr. Paget in inaccuracy. And the phenomenal inexactness of his literary work is the more remarkable, because he has for several years made such a 'pother' about the inaccuracy of other writers. Some thirty years since, he took upon himself to expose Lord Macaulay's historical trips and slips in a series of essays, which he subsequently reprinted and with characteristic modesty christened, 'The New "Examen".' He was still busy in ferreting out Lord Macaulay's inaccuracies and magnifying even his pettiest mistakes into great literary offences, when he brought out his own first essay on Lady Hamilton, with its two blunders *per* page of original writing. The writer, who, should he be remembered by anyone fifty years hence, will be remembered only as one of the most inaccurate writers of the Victorian period, was curiously blind to his own faults, whilst playing the scornful censor of the historian, who is to him as 'captain is to subaltern.'

In judging histories, more especially in judging works of personal history, critics should make charitable allowance for the unavoidable inaccuracy of works, containing a large number of dates into which errors are so apt to glide, and composed necessarily

from more or less defective materials. Though I have taken the greatest possible pains to render this book accurate, I cannot venture to hope it will be found absolutely guiltless of error in respect to matters of fact. But an author who, like Mr. Paget, blunders in his articles at the rate of a thousand blunders of fact to every five hundred pages of original writing, far exceeds the measure of inaccuracy for which allowance should be made. I may also venture to observe that it is ill for conscientious authors, disadvantageous to readers, hurtful to the dignity and influence of critics, and especially injurious to the reputation of the particular medium of public information, when a slapdash and 'happy-go-lucky' essayist is permitted to play the part of a literary critic in so respectable and influential an organ as 'Blackwood's Magazine.'

One more example of Mr. Paget's way of doing and not doing things in his second essay on Lady Hamilton. Having in the earlier article represented, that Nelson was stayed in his hot pursuit of the French in June, 1798, by 'urgent want of provisions and water,' and that he consequently watered and victualled at Syracuse in that month, Mr. Paget in the later article (1888), instead of frankly acknowledging and correcting his prodigious blunder, has recourse to a familiar device, in order to put himself right without crying 'peccavi.' By preluding his second account of the incidents, touching the 'secret order' for watering at Syracuse, with the words 'what then occurred we transcribe from the article we published eight-and-twenty years ago,' Mr. Paget causes unsuspici-

ous readers to imagine that the second account (May, 1888) is substantially a mere reproduction of the earlier account (April, 1860). There is however a remarkable difference between the two accounts,—a difference of the few words printed below in italics,—

Mr. Paget's earlier (1860) *Account closes thus:*	*Mr. Paget's later* (1888) *Account closes thus:*
'Armed with the authority, Nelson entered the port of Syracuse, victualled and watered his fleet, and fought and won the battle of the Nile.'	'Nelson . . . . *immediately started in search of the French fleet. After a fruitless search he arrived at Syracuse,* where, armed with the Queen's order, he victualled and watered his fleet, and addressed the following letter to Sir William and Lady Hamilton.'

In 1860, trusting to Pettigrew and Pettigrew's reproduction of 'Lady Hamilton's Statement,' both of whom state precisely that Nelson had returned from his first Egyptian trip in the June of that year, Mr. Paget represented that on 17th June, 1798, Nelson was 'in urgent want of provisions and water' (which was not the case),—that on 17th June, 1798, Nelson received the order for watering at Syracuse,—and that he forthwith hastened to Syracuse and there in June, 1798, got the 'provisions and water' he needed so urgently.—In 1888, after learning from 'Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson' into what an absurd scrape he had been put by Dr. Pettigrew, Mr. Paget, whilst affecting to hold to his former statement, represents that on getting the order for the water and victuals, *which he needed so urgently*,

Nelson started immediately on his first trip to Egypt, and did not go to Syracuse till 'after the fruitless search,' when he entered the port, and used the order, which he had held in his possession for more than an entire month without using it. Whilst making this *new* statement of the case in 1888, Mr. Paget is so indiscreet as to suggest, that it is substantially the same statement that he made in 1860. This is how Mr. Paget 'tries to get out of the scrape.' He had better have taken a manlier course. His device has not succeeded.

In both essays Mr. Paget insists that in June, 1798, Nelson was in urgent want of provisions and water, whereas, instead of wanting victuals and water *then*, the Admiral only sent Troubridge to Naples, to ascertain where the squadron could water and victual a month later, *when* its supplies would be failing. Here is a question for Mr. Paget to answer. If (as Mr. Paget asserts) Nelson was in June so *urgently in need of provisions*, that he was forced to stop in his 'hot pursuit' of the French, and must in that month have gone back to Gibraltar for water and provisions, had it not been for the secret and timely order to the Governor of Syracuse, how came it that (as Mr. Paget *now* asserts) the Admiral's squadron made the first and fruitless run to Egypt, and kept at sea for more than another full month *without getting any fresh supplies of victuals and water? If* the British squadron was powerless to pursue the French any further on 17th June, on account of failure of water and provisions, how was it able after that day to pursue the French

hotly to Malta and onwards towards Alexandria, to make fruitless search for them in Syrian waters, and then to return to Sicilian waters by 17th July, without having in any way supplied the urgent wants, that (according to Mr. Paget) forced them to desist from the pursuit more than a month earlier?

This is the question for Mr. Paget to answer. As it will be read in this page, wherever 'Blackwood's Magazine' circulates, and by naval officers on every naval station, Mr. Paget will answer this question, *if he can*. To save his own credit, and the credit of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' which will suffer from his silence, even more than it has suffered in reputation from his latest contribution to its columns, he will reply, *if* he sees any way of replying effectively.

For the present I bid Mr. Paget 'adieu!' I part with him in no hostile spirit. It is impossible for me to turn away in ill-humour from the disputant who, as we move from one another in opposite directions, shouts backwards over his shoulder, 'Emma Hamilton, the idol of Nelson, takes her place in the history of the world, beside Judith and Joan of Arc!'—Poor Emma Hamilton! What malicious imp can have incited Mr. Paget to sentence her to stand for ever on the historic stage between Judith and Joan of Arc?

THE END.

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